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## STORIES OF THE IRISH PEASANTRY.

BY MRS S. C. HALL.

"Mind not high things: but condescend to men of low estate."  
St PAUL.

### "DO YOU THINK I'D INFORM?"

JAMES HARRAGAN was as fine a specimen of an Irishman as could be met with in our own dear country, where the "human form divine," if not famous for very delicate, is at least celebrated for very strong proportions: he was, moreover, a well-educated, intelligent person; that is to say, he could read and write, keep correct accounts of his buying and selling, and managed his farm, consisting of ten good acres of the best land in a part of Ireland where all is good (the Barony of Forth), so as to secure the approbation of an excellent landlord, and his own prosperity. It was a pleasant sight to see the honest farmer bring out the well-fed horse and the neatly appointed car, every Saturday morning, whereon his pretty daughter Sydney journeyed into Wexford, to dispose of the eggs, butter, and poultry, the sale of which aided her father's exertions.

Sydney was rather an unusual name for a young Irish girl; but her mother had been housekeeper to a noble lady, who selected it for her, though it assimilated strangely with Harragan. The maiden herself was lithe, cheerful, industrious, and of a gentle loving nature; her brown affectionate eyes betokened, as brown eyes always do, more of feeling than of intellect; and her red lips, white teeth, and rich dark hair, entitled her to the claim of rustic beauty. Her mother had been dead about two years, and Sydney, who during her lifetime was somewhat inclined to be vain and thoughtless, had, as her father expressed it, "taken altogether a turn for good," and discharged her duties admirably as mistress of James Harragan's household. She had five brothers, all younger than herself; the two elder were able and willing to assist in the farm, the juniors went regularly to school.

Sorrow for the loss of his wife had both softened and humbled James Harragan's spirit; and when Sydney, disclaiming any assistance, sprang lightly into the car, and seated herself in the midst of her rural treasures, her father's customary prayer, "Good luck to you, Sydney, my darling," was increased by the prayer of "May the Lord bless you, and keep you to me, now, and till the day of my death!"

The car went on, Sydney laughing and nodding to her father, while he smiled and returned her salutation, though, when she was fairly out of sight, he passed the back of his rough hand across his eyes, and muttered, "I almost wish she was not so like her mother!" When James entered his cottage, he sat by the fire, and, taking down a slate that hung above the settle, began to make thereupon sundry calculations, which I do not profess to understand; how long he might have continued so occupied, I cannot determine, for his cogitations were interrupted by the entrance of a gentleman, who was by his side ere he noticed his approach. The usual salutations were exchanged; the best chair dusted, and presented to the stranger; every thing in the house was tendered for his acceptance. "His honour had a long walk, would he have an egg or a rasher for a snack; Sydney was out, but Beasy her cousin was above in the loft, and would get it or any thing else in a minute; or maybe he'd have a glass of ale—good it was—Cherry's ale—no better in the kingdom." All Irishmen—and particularly so fine and manly a fellow as James—to be seen to advantage, should be seen in their own houses—CABINS I cannot call such as are tenanted by the warm farmers of this well-cultivated district.

Mr Herrick, however, could not be tempted; he would not suffer the rasher to be cut, nor the ale to be drawn, and James looked sad because his visitor declined accepting his humble but cheerful hospitality.

"James," said Mr Herrick, "I am glad I found you at home and alone, for I wanted to speak with you. I have long considered you superior to your neighbours.

I do not mean as a farmer—though you have twice received the highest prizes which the Agricultural Society bestow—but as a man."

James looked gratified, and said he was so.

"I have found you, James, the first to see improvement, and to adopt it, however much popular prejudice might be against it. You have been ever ready to listen to and act upon the advice of those whom your reason told you were qualified to give it; and you have not been irritated or annoyed when faults, national or individual, have been pointed out to you which can be and ought to be remedied."

"I believe what your honour says is true; but sure it's proud and happy we ought to be to have the truth told of us—it is what does not always happen; if it did, poor Ireland would have had more justice done her long ago than ever came to her share yet."

"And that, James, is also true," said Mr Herrick; "the Irish character has not only its individual differences, which always must be the case, but it has its provincial, its baronial distinctions."

"Indeed, sir," replied Harragan, "there can be no doubt about that; we should be sorry, civilised as we are here, to be compared to the wild rangers of Connaught, or to the stayed, quiet, tradesman-like people of the north."

"The northerners are a fine prudent people," said Mr Herrick, "notwithstanding your prejudice; but what you have said is only another proof that persons may write very correctly about the north of Ireland, and yet, unless they see the south, form a very limited, or, it may be, erroneous idea of the character of the south-erns. The Irish are more difficult to understand than people imagine. You are a very unmanageable people, James," added the gentleman, good humouredly.

"Bedad, sir, I suppose you're right; some of us are, I dare say. And now, sir, I suppose there is a reason for that."

"There is," answered his friend. "You are an unmanageable people, because of your prejudices."

"That's your old story against us, Mr Herrick," said James; "and yet you can't deny but I've been often led by your honour, and for my good, I'll own to that."

"James," continued his friend, "will you answer me one question? Were you, or were you not, at Gerald Casey's on Monday week?"

James's countenance fell, it positively elongated, at the question. So great was the change, that those who did not know the man might have imagined he had committed a crime, and anticipated immediate punishment. "At Gerald Casey's?" he repeated.

Mr Herrick drew a letter—a soiled, dirty-looking letter—from his pocket, and slowly repeated the question.

"I was, sir," he answered, resting his back against the dresser, and pressing his open palms upon the board, as if the action gave him strength.

"Who was there, James?"

"Is it who was in it, sir? Why, there was—Bedad, sir, there was—Oh, then, it's the bad head I have 'at remembering—I forget who was there." And the countenance of James assumed, despite his exertions, a lying expression that was totally unworthy his honest nature.

"James," observed Mr Herrick, "you used not to have a bad memory. I have heard you speak of many trifling acts of kindness my father showed you when you were a boy of twelve years old."

The farmer's face was in a moment suffused with crimson, and he interrupted him with the grateful warmth of an affectionate Irish heart. "Oh, sir, sure you don't think I'm worse than the poor dog that follows night and day at my foot! You don't think I've no heart in my body!"

"I was talking of your memory," said Mr Herrick, quietly; "and I ask you again to tell me who were at Gerald Casey's on Monday week?"

"I left Gerald Casey's before dusk, sir; and it's what took me in it was—"

"I don't ask you when you left it, or what took you there. I only ask you who were present?"

James saw there was no use in equivocating, for that Mr Herrick would be answered. He was, as I have said, an excellent fellow; yet he had, in common with his countrymen, a very provoking way of evading a question; but, anxious as he was to evade this, he could not manage it. Mr Herrick looked him so steadfastly in the face, that he slowly answered, "I'd rather not say one way or other who was there or who was not there. I've an idea, from something I heard this morning, before the little girl went into Wexford, that I know now what your honour's driving at. And sure," and his face deepened in colour as he continued—"and sure, Mr Herrick, 'do you think I'd inform?'"

Mr Herrick was not astonished at the answer he received. On the contrary, he was quite prepared for it, and prepared also to combat a principle that militates so strongly against the comfort and security of those who reside in Ireland.

"Will you," he inquired, "tell me what you mean by the word 'inform?'"

"It's a mean dirty practice, sir," replied Harragan, "to be repeating every word one hears in a neighbour's house."

"So it is," answered the gentleman; "an evil, mean practice, to repeat what is said merely from a love of gossip. But suppose a person, being accidentally one of a party, heard a plot formed against your character, perhaps your life, and not only concealed the circumstance, but absolutely refused to give any clue by which such a conspiracy could be detected—"

"Oh, sir," interrupted Harragan, "that's nothing here nor there. I couldn't tell in the grey of the evening who went in or out of the place; I had no call to any one, and I don't want any one to have any call to me."

"You must know perfectly well who was there," said Mr Herrick. "The case is simply this: a gentleman in this neighbourhood has received two anonymous letters, attacking the character of a person who has been confidentially employed by him for some years. James Harragan, you know who wrote those letters; and I ask you, how, as an honest man, you can lay your head upon your pillow and sleep, knowing that an equally honest man may be deprived of the means to support his young family, and be turned adrift upon the world through the positive malice of those who are envious of his prosperity and good name."

James looked very uncomfortable, but did not trust himself to speak.

"I repeat, you know by whom these letters are written."

"As I hope to be saved!" exclaimed James, "I saw no writing—not the scratch of a pen!"

"Harragan," continued Mr Herrick, "it would be well for our country if many of its inhabitants were not so quick at invention."

"I have not told a lie, sir."

"No, but you have done worse—you have equivocated. Though you did not see the letter written, you knew it was written; and an equivocation is so cowardly, that I wonder an Irishman would resort to it; a lie is in itself cowardly, but an equivocation is more cowardly still."

Harragan for a moment looked shillash and crab-thorns at his friend, for such he had frequently proved himself to be, but made no further observation, simply confining himself to the change and repetition of the sentences—"Do you think I'd inform?" "Not one belonging to me ever turned informer."

"Am I then," said Mr Herrick, rising, "to go away with the conviction, that you know an injury has been done to an innocent person, and yet will not do any thing to convict a man guilty of a moral assassination?"

"A what, sir?"

"A moral murder."

"Look here, sir; one can't fly in the face of the country. If I was to tell, my life would not be safe either in or out of my own house; you ought to know this. Besides, there is something very mean in an informer."

"It is very sad," replied Mr Herrick, "that a spirit of combination for evil more than for good destroys the confidence which otherwise the gentry and strangers would be disposed to place in the peasantry of Ireland. As long as a man fears to speak and act like a man, so long as he dare not hear the proud and happy sound of his own voice in condemnation of the wicked, and in praise of the upright—so long, in fact, as an Irishman dare not speak what he knows—so long, and no longer, will Ireland be insecure, and its people scorned as cowards!"

"As cowards!" repeated James indignantly.

"Ay," said Mr Herrick; "there is a moral as well as a physical courage. The man who, in the heat of battle, faces a cannon ball, or who, in the hurry and excitement of a fair or pattern, exposes his bare head to the rattle of shillaloes and clan-alpines without shrinking from punishment or death, is much inferior to the man who has the superior moral bravery to act in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience, and does right while those around him do wrong."

"I dare say that's all very true, sir," said James, scratching his head; adding, while most anxious to change the subject, "It's a pity yer honour wasn't a councillor or a magistrate, a priest, minister, or friar himself, then you'd have great sway entirely with your words and your learning."

"Not more than I have at present. Do you think it is a wicked thing to take away the character of an honest man?"

"To be sure I do, sir."

"And yet you become a party to the act."

"How so, sir?"

"By refusing to bring, or assist in bringing, to justice those who have endeavoured to ruin the father of a large family. Do you believe so many murders and brawlings would take place if the truth was spoken?"

"No, sir."

"That's a direct answer from an Irishman for once. If the evil-disposed, the disturbers of the country, knew that truth would be spoken, disturbances would soon cease; you believe this, and yet, by your silence, you shield those whom you know to be bad, and despise with all your heart and soul."

"I don't want to have any call to them one way or other, good, bad, or indifferent," answered James.

"Very well," said Mr Herrick, thoroughly provoked at the man's obstinacy, and rising to leave the cottage; "you say you wish to have no call to them. But mark me, James Harragan: when the spirit of anonymous letter-writing gets into a neighbourhood—when wicked-minded persons can destroy either a man's reputation or his life with equal security, there is no knowing where the evil may stop, or who shall escape its influence. The knowledge of the extent to which these secret conspiracies are carried, deters capitalists from settling amongst us; they may have security for their money, but they have none for their lives; if they offend by taking land, or offering opposition to received opinions, their doom may be fixed; those whom they have trusted will know of that doom, and yet no one will come forward to save them from destruction."

"Sir," said Harragan, "secret information is sometimes given."

"I would accept no man's secret information," answered Mr Herrick, for he was an upright man, perhaps too uncompromising for the persons with whom he had to deal; "justice should not only be even-handed, but open-handed; it is a reproach to a country when the law finds it necessary to offer rewards for secret information. I wish I could convince you, James, of the difference which exists between a person who devotes his time to peeping and prying for the purpose of conveying information to serve himself, and him who speaks the truth, from the upright and honourable motive of seeing justice done to his fellow-creatures."

"I see the difference clear enough, sir," replied the farmer; "but none of my people ever turned informers. I'll have no call to it, and it's no use saying any more about the matter; there are plenty of people in the country can tell who was there as well as I—I'll have no call to it. When I went in the place, I little thought of who I'd meet there, and I'll go bail it's long before I'll trouble it again. There's enough said and done now."

"A good deal said, certainly," rejoined Mr Herrick, "but nothing done. There are parts of the country where I know that my entering into this investigation would endanger my life, but, thank God, that is not the case here. I will pursue my investigation to the uttermost, and do not despair of discovering the delinquent."

"I hope you may with all my heart and soul, sir," replied the farmer.

"Then why not aid me? If you are sincere, why not assist?"

And again James Harragan muttered, "Do you think I'd inform?"

"I declare, before heaven!" exclaimed Mr Herrick, "you are the most provoking people under the sun to deal with."

"I ask your honour's pardon," said James, slyly; "but you have not lived long enough in foreign parts to know that."

"Your readiness will not drive me from my purpose."

I repeat you are the most provoking people in the world to deal with. Convince an Englishman or a Scotchman, and having convinced his reason, you may be certain he will act upon that conviction; but you, however convinced your reason may be, continue to act from the dictates of your prejudice. Remember this, however, James Harragan: you have refused to pluck out the arrow which an unseen hand has planted in the bosom of an excellent and industrious man—take care that the same invisible power does not aim a shaft against yourself!"

Mr Herrick quitted the cottage more in sorrow than in anger; and after he was gone, James Harragan thought over what he had said; he was quite ready to confess its truth, but prejudice still maintained its ascendancy. "Aim a shaft against myself," he repeated; "I don't think any of them would do that, though I'm sorry to say many as good and better than I, have been forced to fly the country through secret malice; it is a bad thing, but times 'll mend, I hope."

Alas! James Harragan is not the only man in my beloved country who satisfies himself with hoping that times will mend, without endeavouring to mend them. "Aim a shaft against myself," he again repeated. "Well, I'm sure what Mr Herrick said is true; but, for all that, I couldn't inform!"

The fact was, that reason as he would, James could not get rid of his prejudice; he could not make the distinction between the man who turns the faults and vices of his fellow-creatures to his own account, and he who, for the good of others, simply and unselfishly speaks the truth.

Time passed on: Mr Herrick, of course, failed in his efforts to discover the author of the anonymous letter; the person against whom it was directed, although protected by his landlord, was ultimately obliged to relinquish his employment, and seek in other lands the peace and security he could not find in his own; he might, to be sure, have weathered the storm, for his enemies, as will be seen by the following anecdote, had no immediate intention of persecuting him to the death. A stranger, who bore a great resemblance to the person so obnoxious to those who met at the smith's forge, was attacked while travelling on an outside car in the evening, and in the immediate neighbourhood, and beaten most severely before his assailants discovered they had ill used the wrong man! Nothing could exceed their regret when they discovered their mistake.

"Ah, thin, who are ye at all at all?" inquired one fellow, after having made him stand up, that they might again knock him down more to their satisfaction; "sure ye're not within a foot as tall as the boy we're after. Is it crooked in the back ye are on purpose? Well, now, think o' that!—what call had ye to be on Barney Brian's car, that so often carries him, and with the same surtoe? and why didn't ye say ye wasn't another? Well, it's heart sorry we are for the mistake, and hope it'll never happen to ye again, to be like another man, and be an outlawyer, as a body may say, having received enough notice to quit long ago, if he'd only heed it, which we'll make him do, or have his life, after we admonish him one more, as we've done you by mistake, with a taste of a bating, which we'd ask ye to tell him, if you know him; there, we'll lay you on the ear, as aisy as if you war in yer mother's lap, and ask ye to forgive us, which we hope you'll do, as it was all a mistake! and no help for it!"

The victim of "the mistake," however, who was an Englishman, suffered for more than three months, and cannot comprehend to this day why those who attacked him so furiously were not sought out and brought to justice. He never could understand why an honest man should refuse to criminate a villain. The poor fellow for whom the beating was intended was not slow to discover the fact, and, with a heavy headache, bade adieu to his native land, which, but for the sake of his young children, he would hardly have quitted even to preserve his own life.

James Harragan did not note those occurrences without much sorrow; he saw his daughter Sydney's eyes red for three entire days from weeping the departure of the exile's wife, whom she loved with the affection of a sister; and he had the mortification to see his beloved barony distinguished in the papers as a "disturbed district" from the mistake to which we have alluded, at the very time when many of the gentry were sleeping with their doors unfastened. James Harragan knew perfectly well that if he had spoken the truth, all this could have been prevented. Still time passed on. Mr Herrick seldom visited James; and though he admired his crops, and spoke kindly to his children, the farmer felt he had lost a large portion of the esteem he so highly valued.

But when a man goes on in the full tide of worldly prosperity, he does not continue long in trouble upon minor matters. Sydney's eyes were no longer red; nay, they were more sparkling than ever, for they were brightened by a passion to which she had been hitherto a stranger. And Sydney, though gifted with as much constancy as most people, if she did not forget, certainly did not think as frequently as before of her absent friend. Sydney, in fact, was what is called—in love; which, I believe, is acknowledged by all who have been in a similar dilemma, to be a very confusing, perplexing situation. That poor Sydney found it so, was evident, for she became subject to certain flushings of the cheek and beatings of the heart, accompanied by a confusion of the intellectual faculties, which puzzled her father for a time quite as much as herself. She would call rabbits chickens, and chickens rabbits, in the public market, and was known to have given forty-two new laid eggs for a shilling, when she ought only to have given thirty-six.

Then in her garden, her own pet garden, she sowed mignonette and hollyhocks together, and wondered how it was that what she fancied sweet pea, had come up "love lies bleeding." Dear, warm, affectionate Sydney Harragan! She was a model of all that is excellent in simple guileless woman; and when Ralph Furlong drew from her a frank but most modest confession that his love

was returned, and that "if her father did not put again it," she would gladly share his cottage and his fortunes, there was not a young disengaged farmer in the county that would not have envied him his "good luck."

Soon after James Harragan's comment had been obtained to a union which he believed would secure the happiness of his darling child, the farmer was returning from the fair of New Ross, where he had been to dispose of some spare farming-stock; and as he trotted briskly homeward, passing the well-known mountain, or, as it is called, "Roek" of Carrickburn, he was overtaken by a man, to whom he had seldom spoken since the evening when he had seen him and some others at Gerald Casey's forge. Many months had elapsed since then. And, truth to say, as the young man had removed to a cottage somewhere on the banks of the blue and gentle river Slaney, James had often hoped that he might never see him again.

"I'm glad I overtook you, Mr Harragan," he said, urging his long lean narrow mare, close to the stout well-fed cob of the comfortable farmer. "It's a fine bright evening for the time of year. I intended coming to you next week, having something particular to talk about."

"Nothing that concerns me, I fancy," replied Harragan, stiffly.

"I hope it does, and that it will; times are changed since we met last—with me particularly," Harragan made no reply, and they rode on together in silence for some time longer.

"Mr Harragan, though you are a trustworthy man as ever step in shoe leather, I am afraid you haven't a good opinion of me."

"Whatever opinion I may have, you know I kept it to myself," replied the farmer.

"Thank you for nothing," was the characteristic reply.

"Ye're welcome," rejoined James, as drily. Again they trotted silently on their way, until the stranger suddenly exclaimed, reining up his mare at the same moment, "I'll tell you what my business would be with you; there's nothing like speaking out of the face at onst."

"You did not always think so," said the farmer.

"Oh, sir, aisy now; let bygones be bygones; the country's none the worse of getting rid of one who was ever and always minding other people's business; and you yourself, Mr Harragan, are none the worse for not having high-bred people ever poking their noses in yer place!"

"Say what you have to say at onst," observed James; "the evening will soon close in, and the little girl I have at home thinks it long till I return."

"It's about her I want to speak," said the stranger.

"If you'll take the trouble some fine morning early to ride over to where the dark green woods of Castle Boro dip their boughs in the Slaney, ye'd see that I have as tidy a place, as well fitted a *haggard*, and as well managed fields, as any houlder of ten acres of land in the county; besides that, I have my eye on another farm that's out of lease, and if all goes right I'll have it. Now, ye see my sister's married, and my mother's dead, and I've no one to look after things; and for every pound ye'd tell down with yer daughter, I'd show a pound's worth. And so, Mr Harragan, I thought that of all the girls in the country, I'd prefer Sydney; and if we kept company for a while"—he turned his handsome but sinister and impudent countenance towards the astonished farmer, adding—"I don't think she'd refuse me."

"You might be mistaken for all that," replied James, grasping his stout stick still more tightly in his hand, from a very evident desire to knock the fellow down.

"Well, now, I don't think I should," he replied, with vulgar confidence; "it's the aisiest thing in life to manage a purty girl, if one has the knack, and I've managed so many."

"Ride on!" interrupted the farmer indignantly. "Ride on, before I am tempted to knock ye off the poor starved beast that ye haven't the heart to feed! Few marry my Sydney—you!—a rascal like you! Why, Stephen Murphy, you must be gone mad—Sydney married with a cowardly backbiter! I'd rather dress her shroud with my own hands. A—ride on, I tell you," he continued, almost choked with passion; "there is nothing, I believe, that you would think too bad to do. And, hark ye, take it for your comfort that she is going to be married to one worthy of her, and I her father say so."

"Oh, very well! very well!" said the bravo; "as you please, Mr Harragan, as you please; I meant to pay yer family a compliment—a compliment for yer silence, ye understand me; not that I would myself over and above obligeed for that either. Ye like to take care of yerself, for the sake of yer little girl, I suppose; and the country might grow too hot for you, as well as for others, if ye made free with yer tongue. No harm done; but if I had spaking with the girl for one hour, I'd put any sweetheart in the county, barring myself, out of her head. I'll find out the happy young man, and wish him joy. Oh, maybe I woud wish joy to the boy for whom I'm insulted," he added, inflicting a blow upon the bare ribs of the poor animal he rode, that made her start; "maybe I woud wish him joy, and give him Steve Murphy's blessing. Starved as ye call my baste, there's twice the blood in her that creeps through the flesh of yer overfed cob;" and, sticking the long solitary iron spur which he wore on his right heel into the mare, he flew past James Harragan, flourishing his stick with a whirl, and shouting so loud, that the mountain echoes of the wild rocks of Carrickburn repeated the words "joy! joy!" as if they had been thrown into their caverns by the fiend of mockery himself.

Instantly James urged his stout horse forward, crying at the top of his voice to Murphy to stop; but either the animal was tired, or the mare was endowed with supernatural swiftness, for he soon lost sight even of the skirts of Murphy's coat, which floated loosely behind him. "The scoundrel!" he muttered to himself, while the gallop of his steed subsided into a heavy but tolerably rapid trot; "I wanted to tell him to take care how he meddled with me or mine. Sydney! Sydney indeed! And the rascal's assurance!—he never spoke three words to my girl in his life! It's a good thing we're rid of him here



any way. I hope he's not a near neighbour of any of Furlong's people, that's all; his impudence—to me who know him so well! Serve me right," he thought within himself, when his mutterings had subsided; "serve me right, to keep the secret of such a fellow. I suffered those who were innocent to leave the country—and he to talk of paying my family a compliment! Mr Herriek said it would come home to me, and so it has. I'm sure Murphy must have been overtaken," or he'd never dare to propose such a thing. But, then, if he was, why, the devil takes the weight off a tipsy man's tongue, and then all's out."

It was night before Harragan arrived at his farm, and there the warm smiles and bright eyes of his Sydney were ready to greet his descent from the back of his stout steed, and the bridegroom elect was ready to hold the horse; and his sons, now growing up rapidly to manhood, crowded round him; and his dog, far more respectable in appearance than the generality of Irish cottage dogs, leaped to lick his hand; and the cat, with tail erect, purred at the door; the very magpie, that Sydney loved for its love of mischief, stretched its neck through its prison bars to greet the farmer's return to his cottage home.

"There's no use in talking," said James Harragan, after the conclusion of a meal which few small farmers are able to indulge in—I mean supper. "There's no use in talking, Sydney—but I can't spare you—it's a certain fact, I cannot spare you. Furlong must find a farm near us, and live here; why, wanting my little girl, I should be like a sky without a sun."

"Farms are not to be had here—they are too valuable to be easily obtained, as you well know," replied the young man; "but sure she'll not be a day's ride from you, sir, unless, indeed, my brother should have the luck to get a farm for me that he's after by the Slaney, a little on the other side of the ferry of Mount Garrett; but that is such a bit of ground as is hard to be met with." The father hardly noticed Furlong's reply, for his eyes and thoughts were fixed upon his child, until the word "Slaney" struck upon his ear, and brought back Murphy, his proposal, his threat, and his flying horse, at once to his remembrance.

"What did you say of a farm on the Slaney?" he inquired, hastily.

"That I have the chance, the more than chance, of as purty a bit of land with a house, a slated house upon it, on the banks of the Silver Slaney, as ever was turned for wheat or barley—to say nothing of green crops, that would bate the world for quality or quantity. My brother has known the cows there yield fourteen or sixteen quarts. I did not like to say any thing about it before, for I was afraid I should never have the luck of it, but he wrote me to-day to say that he was almost sure of it, though some black-hearted villain had written letters without a name to the landlord, and agent, and steward, against us. Think of that now! We that never did a hard turn to man, woman, or child in the country."

James Harragan absolutely shuddered; and, passing his arm round Sydney's neck, drew her towards him with a sort of instinctive affection, like a bird that shelters its nestling beneath its wing, when it hears the wild-hawk's scream upon the breeze.

"Sydney shall never go there," said Harragan. "Not go to the banks of the Slaney!" exclaimed her eldest brother. "Why, father, you don't know what a place it is—you don't know what you say. Besides, an hour and a half would take you quite easy to where Furlong means. You make a great deal too much fuss about the girl." And having so said, he stooped down and kissed her cheek, adding, "Never mind, father; I'll bring you home a daughter that'll be twice as good as Sydney. I'll just take one more summer out of myself, that's all, and then I'll marry; may be I won't show a pattern wife to the country!" And then the youth was rated on the subject of bachelors' wives. And he retallated; and then his sister threatened to box his ears, and was not slow in putting the threat into execution; and soon afterwards, Furlong rose to return home; and Sydney remembered she had forgotten to see to the health and comforts of a delicate calf; and though the servant and her brothers all offered to go, she would attend to it herself; and, five minutes after, her father went to the door, heard her light laugh and low murmuring voice, and saw her standing with her lover in the moonlight—he outside, and she inside the garden-gate, her hand clasped within his, and resting on the little pier that was clustered round with woodbine. She looked so lovely in that clear pure light, that her father's heart ached from very anguish at the possibility of any harm happening to one so dear. He longed to ask Furlong if he knew Murphy, but a choking sensation in his throat prevented him. And when Sydney returned, he caught her to his bosom, and burst into a flood of such violent tears, as strong men seldom shed.

The poisoned chalice was approaching his own lips. What would he not have given at that moment that he had acceded to Mr Herriek's proposal!—for had Murphy's villany become public, he must have quitted the country. How did he, even then, repent that he had not yielded to his reason, instead of his prejudice!

Young Furlong was at a loss to account for the steady determination with which, at their next meeting, his intended father-in-law opposed his taking a farm in every way so advantageous; James hardly dared acknowledge to himself, much less impart to another, the dread he entertained of Steve Murphy's machinations; this was increased tenfold, when he found that he was the person who not only desired, but had offered for that identical farm a heavier rent than he would ever have been able to pay for it. The landlord, well aware of this fact, and knowing that a rack-rent destroys first the land, secondly the tenant, and ultimately the landlord's property, had decided on bestowing his pet farm as a reward to the superior skill and industry of a young man whose enemies were too cowardly to attempt to substantiate their base charges against him.

\* Tipsy.

I can only repeat my often expressed desire, that every other Irish landlord acted in the same manner. It would be impossible to convey an idea of how continually James Harragan's mind dwelt upon Steve Murphy's threat; at first he tried if Sydney's love towards Furlong was to be shaken, but that he found impossible.

"If you withdraw your consent, father," she said, "after having given it, and being perfectly unable to find a single fault with him, I can only say I will not disobey you; but, father, I will never marry—I will never take to any as I took to him, nor you need not expect it—you shall not make me disobedient, father, but you may break my heart." Sydney, resigned and suffering, pained her father more than Sydney remonstrating against injustice. She had before shown him how hard it was, not only after encouraging, but actually accepting Furlong, to dismiss him without reason, and had reproached him in an agony of bitter feeling for his inconsistency. When this did not produce the desired effect, her cheek grew pale, her step languid, her eyes lost their gentle brightness, and her eldest brother ventured to tell his father "that he was digging his daughter's grave!" The disappointment of the young man beggars description; he declared he would enlist, go to sea, "quit the country," break his heart, shoot any who put "betwixt them," and, after many prayers, used every possible and impossible threat, except the one which the Irish so rarely either threaten or execute, that of self-destruction, to induce James to alter his resolution; and James, unable to stand against this domestic storm, did of course retract; and the consequence was, that he lost by this changing mood the confidence of his children, who had ever till then regarded him with the deepest affection. He dared not communicate the reason of his first change, for doing so would have betrayed the foolish and unfortunate secret he had persevered in keeping, in opposition to common sense, and the estrangement of an old and valuable friend; he could not witness the returned happiness of his children without forbidding that something was to occur that would completely destroy it; and the joyous laughter of his daughter, at one time the sweet music of his household, was sure to send him forth with an aching heart.

Nor was young Furlong without his anxieties; he received more than one anonymous letter, threatening that if he did not immediately give up all thoughts of the farm, he would suffer for it; the notices were couched in the usual terms, which, in truth, I care not to repeat; it is quite enough to say that they differed in no respect from others of a similar kind, and with a like intention. However inclined the young man might feel to despise such hints, the experience of the country unfortunately proved that they ought not to be disregarded; but his brother, stronger of heart and spirit, argued that their faction was too powerful, their friends too numerous, to leave room for fear; that their own country was (as it really is) particularly quiet; and that, as Mr Harragan was "so humorous," the best way would be to say nothing at all about it; that it was evident those who had tried to set the landlord against them, having failed in their design, resolved to try the effect of personal intimidation; concluding by observing, "that it was the best way to go on easy," and "never heeding," until after the lease was signed, and the wedding over, and then they'd "see about it!" However consistent this mode of reasoning might be with Irish feeling, it was very sad to perceive how ready the Furlongs were to trust to the strong arm of the people, instead of appealing to the strong arm of the law. I wish the peasantry and their friends could perceive how they degrade themselves in the scale of civilised society by such a course; it is this perpetual taking of all laws, but particularly the law of revenge, into their own hands, that keeps up the hue and cry against them throughout England. I confess time has been when there was one law for the rich and another for the poor, but it is so no longer; and humane lawgivers and administrators of law grow sick at heart when they perceive that they labour in vain for the domestic peace of Ireland.

A few days before the appointed time arrived when Sydney Harragan should become Sydney Furlong, she received a written declaration of love, combined with an offer of marriage, from Murphy. He watched secretly about the neighbourhood until an opportunity arrived for him to deliver it himself. Sydney, to whom he was almost unknown, at first gave a civil yet firm refusal; but when he persevered, she became indignant, and said one or two bitter words, which he swore never to forget. She hardly knew why she concealed from her father the circumstance, which, upon consideration, she was almost tempted to believe a jest; but she did not even mention it to her brothers, fearing it might cause a quarrel, and every Irish woman knows how much easier it is commenced than quelled. Moreover, one mystery is sure to beget another.

At last the eventful day arrived—Sydney all hopes and blushes, her brothers full of frolic and fun, the bride's maids arrayed in their best, and busied in setting the house in order for the ceremony, which, according to ancient Catholic custom, was to take place in the afternoon at the dwelling of the bride.

"Did ye ever see such a frown over the face of a man in yer born days?" whispered Easy Hays to her sister-maid. "Do but just look at the masher, and see how his eyes are set on his daughter, and she reading her prayers like a good Christian, one eye out of the window and the other on her book. Well, she is a purty girl, and it's no wonder so few chances were going for others, and she to the fore."

"Speak for yourself!" exclaimed Jane Temple, tossing her fair ringlets back from her blue eyes. "She is purty for a dark-skinned girl, there's no denying it."

"Dark haired, not dark skinned!" said Easy indignantly; "the darlint! She's the very moral of an angel. I wish to my heart the masher would not look at her so melancholy. May be he's thinking how like her poor dead mother she is! My! if he isn't his reverence (I know the cut of the grey mare, so fat and so smoothly jogging over the hill), and Misher Furlong not come! He went

to his brother across Ferry Carrig yesterday, and was to sleep at his aunt's in Wexford last night; I think he might have been here by this! Well! if it was me, I would be affronted; it is not very late to be sure, only for a bridegroom!"

"Whisht, Easy, will you," returned Jane, "for fear she'd hear you; I never saw so young a bride take so early to the prayers; it seems as if something hung over her and her father for trouble."

"I wonder ye're not ashamed of yerself, Jane," exclaimed the warm-hearted Easy, "to be raising trouble at such a time. Whisht! if there isn't the bridegroom's brother trotting up to the priest. What a handsome bow he makes his reverence, his hat right off his head with the flourish of a new shillash; but, good luck to us all, what ails the masher now!"

James Harragan also had seen the bridegroom's brother as he rode up the hill which fronted their dwelling, and sprang to his feet in an instant. When the heart is fully and entirely occupied by a beloved object, and that object is absent, alarm for its safety is like an electric shock, commencing one hardly knows how, but startling in its effects. Sydney looked in her father's face and screamed; while he, dreading that she had read the half-formed thoughts which were born of fear within his bosom at the sight of the bridesman without the bridegroom, uttered an imperfect assurance that "all was well—all must be well—Ralph had waited for his aunt—old ladies required attention—and, no doubt, they would arrive together." With this assurance he hastened to the door to meet the priest and his companion, and his heart resumed its usual beatings when he observed the jovial expression of the old priest's face, and the rollicking air with which the bridesman bowed to the bride, who crouched behind her father, anxious to hear the earliest news, and yet held back by that sweet modesty which enshrines the hearts of my gentle countrywomen.

"Where's Ralph?" inquired the farmer, while holding the stirrup for his reverence to dismount.

"That's a nate question to be sure," answered his brother. "Where should he be? And so, Miss Sydney, you asked Mr Herriek to come to the wedding, and never told any one of it, by way of a surprise to us—that was very purty of you—and that's the top of his new beaver coming along the hedge. Well, it's quite time Ralph showed himself, I think, and we're waiting."

"Don't be foolish, Harry Furlong!" exclaimed the farmer, hastily. "You know very well that Ralph is not here."

"Well, that's done to the life," said the light-hearted fellow; "that's not bad for a very big—I mustn't say it before the bride; but it's as bold-faced a story as ever I heard. Not here! then, where is he?"

"With his aunt, I darsay, if you don't know," answered Easy.

"Oh, you're in the mischief, too, are you, bright-eyed one? Why, you know he's hid here on the sly to surprise us. Aunt indeed! To be sure he's with his old aunt Bell and his bride alone! What a mighty quare Irishman he must be! I'll advise him not to come to you for a character, whatever I may do; eh, Easy?"

"Will you give over bothering?" she said. "Look at the colour Sydney's turned, and see to the masher—the Lord be betwixt us and harm—none of your nonsense, but tell us where is Ralph?"

The aspect of things changed in an instant. Harry saw that his brother was not there, concealed as he had supposed him to be in mere playfulness, and knew that he was not with his aunt Bell. He knew, moreover, that he had parted from him the night before at the other side of Ferry Carrig; that he was then on his way to Wexford, where he had promised to meet him in the morning; that he had been to their aunt's to keep his tryst, but that he had felt no uneasiness on finding Ralph not there, concluding, that instead of going to the town, he had gone to his bride's house in the country, for which he had intended mirthfully to reproach him when they met. Now seriously alarmed, his anxiety to prevent Sydney from partaking of his feelings almost deprived him of the power of speech; but he had said enough, and, just as Mr Herriek crossed the threshold, the bride fainted at his feet.

Nothing could be more appalling than the change effected in a few moments in the expression of the farmer's face. While each was engaged in imparting to the other hopes for the bridegroom's reappearance, and reasons for his delay, Harragan, having put forth every other assistance, was bending over his insensible child, on the very bed from which she had that morning risen in the fulness of almost certain happiness for years to come. Alas! how little can we tell upon what of all we cherish in this changing world, each rising sun may set!

"If she's not dead," he muttered to himself, "she will die soon. May the Lord deliver me!—the Lord deliver me!" he continued, while chafing her temples; "I saw it all along, like a shroud above me, to fall round her—I did—I did. Who's that?" he inquired, fiercely, as the door gently opened, and Mr Herriek entered within its sanctuary; "oh, it's you, sir, is it? you may come in; I thought it was some of them light-hearted who don't know trouble. Shut them out; my trouble's heavy, sir; look at her, Misher Herriek; and this was the wedding my little girl asked you to, out of friendliness to her father. Her father! why, the Holy Father who is above us all knows that as sure as the beams of the blessed sun are shining on her deathly cheek, so sure am I Ralph Furlong's murderer! You need not draw back, Mr Herriek. I know he's murdered; I felt struck with the knowledge of his death, and I could not help it, the minute his brother (God help him!) laughed in my face. Don't raise up her head, sir; she'll come to soon enough—too soon, like a spirit that comes to the earth but to leave it. I'm not mad, Mr Herriek, though maybe I look so. Be it by fire or water, or steel or bullet, Ralph Furlong's a corpse, and I'll inform this time. I've heard tell the man that betrayed Christ wept after. What good was his tears? What good my informing now? but I will—I will. I'll make a clean breast for onst: I'll do the right thing now, if all the devils of hell tear me into pieces! I tell you, sir,

Steve Murphy did it!—black-hearted, cunning-headed, and bloody-handed he was, from the time his mother begged with him from door to door for what she did not want, and taught him lies by every hedgerow and green bank through the country. I'm punished, Mr Herrick, I'm punished. If I'd informed—but I'll not call it informing—if I'd told the truth when you wanted me about the letters of the forge, he would not have been in the country to commit murder. She's coming to, now, sir; she's coming to."

Gradually poor Sydney revived, but only to suffer more than she had as yet gone through. The people were greatly astonished at the conviction which rested on the farmer's mind that the young man had been murdered, a belief which extended itself to his daughter; for, from the moment she heard that Ralph was not with his aunt, it appeared as if every vestige of hope had vanished from her mind. The men of the company set forward an immediate inquiry; the neighbourhood poured forth, every cottage was emptied of its inmates, the women flocking to the farmer's house to pour consolation and hope into the bosom of the bereaved bride, and the men to assist in a search, which, at the noon-day hour, was a very uncommon occurrence. It is very rarely, indeed, that the Irish peasantry seek assistance either from the police or military force; though they are fond of going to law, they detest those connected with the law. But Mr Herrick promptly rode into Wexford, and having made the necessary inquiries, and ascertained that young Furlong had not been seen at the town, he informed the proper authorities of his mysterious disappearance, and then turned his horse towards Ferry Carrig, to ascertain from the gate-keeper who had passed over the bridge the preceding evening.

Ferry Carrig is one of the picturesque spots which are not so frequently seen by those who journey through my native country. On one side of the Slaney—here a river of glorious width—rises, boldly and wildly, a conical hill, upon the summit of which stands out, in frowning ruin, one of the boldest of the square towers, of which so many were erected by the enterprising Fitz-Stephen. The opposite side of the bridge is guarded by a rock, not so steep or so magnificent as its neighbour, but not less picturesque, though its character is different; the one is absolutely garlanded with heaths, wild-flowers, and the golden-blossomed furze; while the other, affording barely a spot for vegetation, seems planted for eternity—so stern, and fixed, and rugged, that nothing save the destruction of the universe could shake its foundation.

The bridge erected across this beautiful water is of singular construction, and partakes of the wildness of the scene; the planks are not fastened at either end, and the noise and motion has a startling effect to one not accustomed to such modes of transit. When Mr Herrick arrived at the toll-house, he learned that many inquiries had already been made, and that all the toll-keeper could say was, "that positively Ralph Furlong, whom he knew as well as his own son, had not crossed the bridge the preceding evening, although he had been on the look-out for him." The elder Furlong had accompanied his brother to within a mile of the Euseithry side of the bridge, so his disappearance must have occurred between the spot where they separated and the Bridge of Ferry Carrig. Nothing could exceed the energy and exertion to discover the lost bridegroom; every inquiry was made, every break explored, the rivers dragged, but no trace of Ralph Furlong was obtained. Mr Herrick returned to the farm, and it was heart-breaking to observe the totally hopeless expression of Sydney's beautiful face.

"There is no knowing," said the kind gentleman, with a cheerfulness that he but imperfectly assumed; "there is no knowing—he may have left the country."

"No," was her reply; "he would never have deserted me!" Thus did her trust in her lover's fidelity outlive all hope of meeting him alive in this changing world.

In the meantime, James Harragan had proceeded alone to Steve Murphy's cottage. The sun had set, when he found him sitting by his fire, not alone, for his sister was seated on the opposite side.

Harragan entered with the determined air of a desperate man, and neither gave salutation, nor returned that which was given.

"I come," said he, "to ask you where you have hid Ralph Furlong." The man started and changed colour, and then assuming a bold and determined air of defiance, hesitated not to inquire what the farmer meant, who, in reply, as boldly taxed him with the murder. Hard and desperate words succeeded, and the screams of the accused man's sister most likely prevented death, for the farmer, a tall powerful man, had grasped Murphy so tightly by the throat, that a few minutes must have terminated his existence. Although by no means a weakling, he was as a green willow wand in the hands of his assailant.

In vain did his terrified sister declare that her brother was at home early in the evening, and went to bed before she did. Harragan persisted in his charge; and had it not been for the force of superior numbers, he would have succeeded in dragging him to the next police station; but Irish assistance is much more easily procured against the law, than for it, though, I confess, in this instance it was hard for those who did not know all the circumstances to determine whose part to take, for Harragan was under the influence of such strong excitement, that he acted more like a maniac than a man in the possession of his senses.

Having failed in his first object, that of dragging Steve Murphy to justice himself, he mounted his horse, and laid before the nearest magistrate sufficient reason why Steve should be arrested, and detained until further inquiries were made; but when the police force sought for him, he was gone!—vanished! as delinquents vanish in Ireland, where hundreds of sober honest men will absolutely know where a villain is concealed, and yet suffer him to escape and commit more crimes, because their prejudices will not suffer them to inform.

Great was the excitement throughout the country, occasioned by this mysterious event. James Harragan

lived but for one object, that of bringing the murderer to justice. This all-engrossing desire seemed to have absorbed even his affection for his child, that is to say, he would stroke her hair, or press her now colourless cheek to his bosom, and then, turning away with a deep sigh, go on laying down some new plan for the discovery of poor Ralph's murderer. Every body said that Sydney was dying, but her father did not seem to observe that her summer had ceased, when its sun was at the hottest, and its days at the longest, and that the rose was dropping leaf by leaf to the earth. Once Sydney attempted to take the produce of her dairy, which her kind friend Easy tended with more care than her own, to the market.

"If they don't notice me," she said, "I'll do bravely; you'll tell them, Easy, to never heed me." And so Easy did, but it would not do. No prudential motive yet was ever sufficiently strong to restrain the sympathy of the genuine Irish. Twenty stout arms were extended when her car stopped at the corner of the market-place to lift the pale girl off. There was not a woman in the square that did not leave her standing, and crowd round the widowed bride. It would have been as easy to turn the fertilising waters of the Nile, as to turn that torrent of affection. The young girls sobbed, and could not speak for tears; but those tears fell upon Sydney's hands, and moistened her cheeks; it was refreshing to them, for she herself had long ceased to weep; hers were the only dry eyes in the crowd. The mothers prayed that God might bless her, and "raise her up again to be the flower of the country."

"Never heed, Sydney darlint; sure you've the prayers of the country."

"And the double prayers of the poor," exclaimed a knot of beggars, who had abated their vocation to put up their petitions in her favour.

Sydney could have borne coldness or neglect, but kindness overpowered her, and she was obliged to return, leaving her small merchandise to Easy's care.

Every one said that Sydney was hastening to her grave, but still her father heeded it not; no bloodhound ever trailed or panted more eagerly to recover the scent which he had lost, than did the farmer to trace Steve Murphy's flight; it was still his absorbing idea, both by day and night. Had it not been for the exertions of his sons, his well-cultivated farm would have gone to ruin. His health was suffering from this monomania; the flesh shrank daily from his bones; and the healthy jocond farmer was changing into a gigantic skeleton. The priest talked to him, Mr Herrick reasoned with him, but all to no purpose.

Time passed, and James Harragan entered his cottage as the sun was setting. He had stood for the last hour leaning against the post of his gate, apparently engaged in watching the sparrows flying in and out of their old dwelling-places in the thatch. His sons had prepared his supper, and he sat down mechanically in his old place; the two lads whispered for some time together at the window, when suddenly Harragan inquired "what they muttered for?" The youths hesitated to reply.

"Let me know what it was!" he exclaimed. "I'll have no whispering, no cooing, no hiding and seeking in my house. Boys, there's a hell at this moment burning in yer father's breast! Look, I never could kill one of them small birds that destroy the roof above our heads, without feeling I took from the innocent thing the life I couldn't give; and yet, what does that signify? Isn't my hand red at this time of speaking with that boy's blood! Red—it's red hot—hissing red with the blood of Ralph Furlong! It is as much so as if I did it! And why?—because I held on at the mystery that shades the guilty, and hurries on the innocent to destruction—because I wouldn't inform! Now, mind me, boys, I'll have nothing but out speaking; no whispering; where there's that sort of secrecy, there's sin and the curse. What war you whispering?" he added, in a voice of thunder.

"We war only saying, sir," replied the elder, "that we wonder Sydney and Easy ain't back."

"Back! Why, where is my little girl?" "She took a thought this morning, sir," he answered, "and we don't like to say against her, that she'd walk from Ferry Carrig Bridge to where us parted from his brother, and took Easy with her on the car as far as the bridge; it's a notion she had."

"My colleen!—my pride!—my darlint!" he ejaculated, much moved, "and I not to know this! Yer mother little thought when she made ye over to me before death made her over to the holy angels, what would happen. And ye didn't tell me, because ye thought I didn't care! Well, I forgive ye—I forgive ye, boys! I didn't neglect her though, for all that; my heart was set on another matter. There is but one thing she can spake on, one thing I can spake on—and it is better we shouldn't—but, and when she does look at me, though my little girl strives to keep it under, there is in her eyes what says, 'If ye had spoken the truth long ago, it's a happy wife I'd be now instead of —' Oh, God!—oh, God!" he exclaimed passionately, "that I should have suffered such a snake to fatten on the land, when I could have crushed him under my heel! I'd have rest in my grave if I could see him in his. I'll go meet her, boys. You should have gone before." And the farmer stalked forth, and, silently mourning his cob, proceeded on the road to Ferry Carrig.

There are mysteries around us, both night and day, for which it would be difficult indeed to account; and the impulse that drew Sydney that morning to the banks of the Slaney, was, and ever must be, unaccountable.

"Nurses," she said to her faithful friend Easy, after they crossed the bridge, and, quitting the coach-road, made unto themselves a path along the bank; "nurses like you, Easy, may be called the brides-maids of death, and you have been my nurse all through this sickness." Easy afterwards said she did not know what there was in those words to make her cry, but she could not answer for weeping. The two girls wandered on, Sydney stopping every now and then to look into the depths and shallows of the river, and prying beneath every broad green leaf and clump of trees that overhung its banks.

More than once they sat down, and more than once did Easy propose their return, but Sydney went on, as if she had not spoken. At last they came to a species of deep drain, almost overgrown with strong, tall, leafy, water-plants, that was always filled when the tide was full in. Easy sprang lightly over it, and then turning a little way up to where it was narrower, she extended her hand to her feeble friend. Although the gulf was narrow, it was very deep; the root of a tree had formed a natural dam across it, so that much water was retained. As Sydney was about to cross, she cast her eyes beneath, started, and held back. She did not speak, but, with her hand pointed downwards, Easy's shriek rang through the air—the face of Ralph Furlong stared at them from the bottom of the silent pool!

Had she not removed the broad leaves of a huge dock that shaded the water, so that Sydney's footing might be sure, the unconscious girl would have stepped without knowing it over her lover's liquid grave. Easy was so overwhelmed with horror, that she ran shrieking towards the highway; several minutes elapsed before she returned with assistance; and then where was Sydney! The faithful girl, in endeavouring to draw his body from the waters, had fallen in; her head was literally resting on his bosom, and her long beautiful hair floating like a pall above them!

They were buried in the same grave!

When Murphy's cottage was searched by the police, the only weapon, if so it could be called, which they discovered, was a broken reaping-hook; this James Harragan had taken to his own house, and in the folds of poor Ralph's coat, those who prepared him for his earthly grave discovered the missing portion. The farmer was seen to shed no tear over his daughter, but registered an oath in heaven that he would never take rest upon his bed until he had brought the murderer to justice. Within a week after, he relinquished his farm to his sons, and it is believed he has journeyed to foreign lands in pursuit of one, who, in the first instance, escaped justice through James Harragan's own weak and almost wicked perseverance in a wrong cause. Years have passed since the melancholy event occurred, and no tidings have ever reached the county relative to Harragan or the murderer. Well, indeed, may he remember Mr Herrick's warning. The farmer had, by withholding his information, refused to pluck out the arrow which an unseen hand had planted in the bosom of an excellent and industrious man, and the same power had been employed to overthrow his happiness for ever!

#### PROPOSED NEW PLAN OF POSTAGE.

ABOUT two years ago, when the subject of a cheap system of postage began to be agitated in the country, we offered a few explanatory observations on it, and took occasion to point out what we considered to be faults in the proposed plan. The recent publication of the "Third Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Postage," throws a body of new light upon this most important branch of social economy, and enables us to take up the new plan in a much more satisfactory manner than when we had only a few facts from a private pamphleteer to guide us.

It would, we think, be a complete waste of our limited space to go into a lengthened proof of the injury done to society by the present dear mode of transmitting letters by post. That dearth is matter of universal complaint, and leads to all manner of evasions of posting, suppresses correspondence to an incalculable extent, and forms a tax of serious amount on trade and commerce. According to the Report before us, "it is injurious to all classes, socially and individually interfering with their moral and intellectual improvement, and with their physical welfare; obstructive to trade, as checking the free dissemination of invoices, orders, and the like; to science, as circumscribing the operations of different learned societies; to knowledge, as offering an impediment to the publication of books; to health, as preventing the transmission of medical advice, and lymph for vaccination; to justice, by opposing increased expense and delay to legal proceedings; to the poor, as imposing a grievous tax on their letters; and to public morals, as leading to evasions of the law, and to the impairing of that habitual respect, which, for the good of all, it is well that all should entertain."

With respect to the evasions of posting, the Report presents some curious facts, such, for example, as the communication of intelligence by means of marks on newspapers, which must be familiar to many of our readers. No species of enactments can prevent these evasions. For instance, what law could check the following plan of evasion, which has come under our notice. A gentleman goes upon a journey through a series of towns, and gives his friends at home full intelligence of his movements by simply writing a fictitious address on a newspaper to the care of the real person to whom the paper is sent—thus, "Mr London of Tuesday Street, care of Mr Johnston, 110, Thistle Street, Edinburgh"—by which the said Mr Johnston knows that his friend reached London on Tuesday. Or, take the following—"Lady Jenkins Sonborn, of Castle Mundy, care of Mrs Williams, 67, St James's Square, London;" by which the said Mrs Williams learns that her friend Lady Jenkins has been safely delivered of a son on Monday. We repeat, no penal statute can reach such rogueries as these, and to expect people to desist from them, is to expect too much from human nature: the very drollery of the thing causes them to be practised by individuals who would scorn to commit a moral transgression. The Report of the Committee bears a similar testimony—"The practice of illicit conveyance of let-



ters prevails to a large and increasing extent, favoured by the high rates, for the most part, but partly from want of sufficient opportunities for dispatching letters through proper channels; the law has been found impotent to repress this practice; and, if it could be repressed, a most serious evil would be inflicted on society, with no corresponding advantage to the revenue; and no effectual remedy can be supplied otherwise than by reducing the legal rates to the level of the illicit trader, in which case the committee are of opinion that the superior regularity and safety of the post would draw all letters into that channel, and effectually repress the evasions which perpetually take place by means of conventional modes of communications by marks on newspapers."

Another monstrous abuse consists in the practice of sending letters by franks. It is impossible to speak with any degree of patience of this practice, by which, in point of fact, the wealthy or the friends of certain officials and members of the legislature get their letters conveyed all over the country for nothing, while from persons in business, the labouring poor, and public generally, high rates of postage are exacted. It appears from the Report that the number of franked letters passing through the Post-Office amounts to an eleventh of the whole—the total of chargeable letters being 78,000,000, while the franked are 7,036,000, annually. By adding 44,500,000 newspapers, we have the sum-total of the material carried yearly by the mails.

In consequence of the immense extent of illicit conveyance of letters, also of the system of franking, and the general diminution of literary intercourse, the revenue of the Post-Office is on the whole a very small affair. For the year ending the 5th of January 1838, after deducting £698,632, 2s. 2d. for cost of management, the revenue left was only £1,641,105, 16s. 1d. Little more than a million and a half of profit on the enormous business of transmitting all the post letters in the United Kingdom! The increase, as it appears, is only £3578 annually, which is much below what would be warranted by the increase of population and commerce.

The principal part of the expense of the Post-Office establishment consists of the charges incurred for receiving, sorting, and delivering the letters. In comparison of these expenses, the cost of transmission by mails is small and unimportant. "As all letters, whether going to a short distance or to a great distance, must be both received and delivered, the chief expenses are common to all; and the total cost, therefore, is much the same, whatever the distance may be to which the letter is carried. It is not a matter of inference, but a matter of fact, that the expense to the Post-Office is practically the same, whether a letter goes from London to Barnet [12 miles], or from London to Edinburgh [400 miles]. The difference is not expressible in the smallest coin we have. It is undeniable that letters could be sent from London to Edinburgh by an ordinary coach parcel, at a cost of somewhat less than one-tenth of a penny each."—*Report*.

It being thus allowed by a fair calculation that distance in transmission is practically of no consequence, the idea has been suggested that all letters whatsoever should be subject to a uniform rate of postage, and that, to extinguish illicit conveyance, and serve the country, the rate should be very small. The individual who has the credit of having first made this proposition is Mr Rowland Hill, the special examination of whose plan formed one of the objects of the committee. Mr Hill's plan embraces the following points:

1. That all letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight, should be conveyed from any one place in the United Kingdom to any other, for the charge of 1d.
2. That all letters exceeding half an ounce in weight, should be subject to an additional penny for every additional half ounce.
3. That such postage should be paid in advance.
4. That the postage shall be collected in advance by the sale of stamped paper or stamped paper covers; and that in order to facilitate obtaining stamps in any distant place, every keeper of a Post-Office shall have them constantly on sale.

In the very first instance, it might be necessary to allow an option to the public to pay 1d. in advance, or 2d. on delivery; but it was desirable to get rid of the option as soon as the circumstances of the case would permit."

In formerly treating of this subject, we expressed an opinion that payment of the penny in advance, or sending a letter under a penny stamped cover, however admirable an arrangement for simplifying the duties of the Post-Office officials, would be found not to work well. We have still the same fear. Under the existing arrangements, few persons pay letters in advance who are desirous of having them delivered in due course of post. It is believed that the obligation to get money for a letter quickens the diligence of the deliverers, in respect both to discovering the residence of an obscure person, and to taking the letter to that person at the first round of delivery. Mr Hill, we believe, has foreseen that objections of this nature would be urged against his plan of paying in advance, and proposes to overcome the difficulty, by giving a right to seek receipts for letters on committing them to the care of the Post-Office. Should this or some other means of checking irregularities be established, our fears for the success of the plan would at once be allayed.

It has been computed by the committee that the adoption of a uniform rate of a penny for each letter of half an ounce or under, by increasing the number of chargeable letters to four hundred millions, would cause a loss to the public revenue of about £300,000 annually. The deficiency, however, Mr Hill considers, would be made good by the beneficial effect which the great extension given to the correspondence of the country would have on the other branches of the revenue. Every branch of trade and commerce would be improved, he conceives, by cheap correspondence. Of this, indeed, no rational thinker can have the smallest doubt. Thousands of small orders for goods would pour into the large towns from the country, and increase the consumption of many excisable articles. At present no such orders can be sent.

After a lengthened scrutiny into all departments of the subject, the committee concludes its Report with the following among other resolutions:—

"That so soon as the state of the public revenue will admit of the risking a larger temporary reduction, it will be expedient to subject all inland letters to a uniform rate of 1d. per half ounce, increasing at the rate of 1d. for each additional half ounce."

That prior to establishing the uniform rate of 1d., it would be expedient, in the first instance, to reduce the rates on inland general post letters to a uniform rate of 2d. per half ounce, increasing at the rate of 1d. for each additional half ounce; reserving all the cases of prices current, the letters of soldiers and sailors, and others, where a penny only is now charged, and of such short inland rates as are hereafter recommended to be charged on a distance of 15 miles.

That, considering the strength of concurrent evidence on the evasion of postage between neighbouring towns, and also that the present system of penny-posts is partial and unequal, a uniform rate of 1d. per half ounce ought immediately to be established for all distances not exceeding 15 miles from the Post-Office where the letter is posted, the payment being made in advance, through the medium of some kind of stamp; and that the charge when not paid in advance should be 2d.

That it would be politic in a financial point of view, and agreeable to the public sense of justice, if, in effecting the proposed reduction of postage, the privilege of parliamentary franking were to be abolished, and the privilege of official franking placed under strict limitation; petitions to Parliament, and parliamentary documents, being still allowed to go free."

Such being the singularly liberal recommendations of the committee in this most important subject of general concern, the matter may be said to rest in a great measure betwixt the country at large and the ministers of the crown who are charged with the management of the public revenue. It can, we think, admit of no doubt that the establishment of either an universal penny or twopenny postage would be hailed as an immense boon by all classes of the people, and, along with the organisation of railways now in progress, would give such an impetus to all branches of internal commerce as would carry the country through all its social embarrassments.

#### ODD LONDON CHARACTERS OF FORMER TIMES.

FRANCIS GROSE, THE ANTIQUARY.

FRANCIS GROSE was the son of an individual of the same name, who carried on the business of a jeweller at Richmond, and had been employed to fit up the coronation-crown of George II. The father must have been a man of tastes superior to those of common tradesmen in his day, as, at his death in 1769, he left a collection of prints and shells, which were thought worthy of being brought to a public sale. Two other sons besides the subject of the present notice became authors; namely, Mr John Grose, F.A.S., Chaplain of the Tower, who published a volume on Ethics, and some sermons; and Mr John Henry Grose, author of "A Voyage to the East Indies," which appeared in 1772. The wealth left by the father to our antiquary was sufficient to have made him independent for life; but it did not last long. Of a gay and easy nature, he was little fitted to take care of money, whether belonging to himself or others. Having entered the Hampshire militia, and undertaken the duties of its adjutant and paymaster, he used no other accounts, as himself used to tell in after years, but his right and left hand pockets. In the one he received; from the other he paid; the balance might at any time of course be struck by counting the contents of the one against the other; but that this was not done very frequently, may readily be surmised. At a subsequent period, Mr Grose was a captain in the Surrey militia: such was the whole extent of his military career. Already, though only about thirty, he had acquired that Falstaff-like figure for which he ever after was remarkable, and which suited so well with his good-humoured character.

When carelessness and love of pleasure brought their usual consequences in pecuniary embarrassment,

Grose was roused to the exercise of talents which might have otherwise remained dormant. He projected an extensive and valuable work, for which the gift of the artist and the learning of the historical antiquary were alike necessary, namely, his "Antiquities of England and Wales," the first Number of which appeared in 1773. Ultimately, this work comprehended, in eight quarto volumes, five hundred and eighty-nine views of antique objects, besides forty plans, many head-pieces, and a variety of minor draughts, all executed by himself, and illustrated by appropriate letter-press, including illustrative dissertations on monastic institutions, castles, Gothic architecture, and Druidical and sepulchral monuments. The publication met with distinguished success, and encouraged the author to enter upon another task of an almost equally laborious nature, his "Military Antiquities, respecting a History of the English Army, from the Conquest to the Present Time," which was published in numbers between the years 1786 and 1788, and ultimately formed two volumes, quarto. While occupied with this latter work, he published a smaller one of a kindred nature, "A Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons, illustrated by Plates taken from the Original Armour in the Tower of London, and other Armours, Museums, and Cabinets;" 1785, quarto.

The cheerfulness and comicality of Grose's nature suffered no diminution while he was engaged in these grave duties. While acknowledged by other men to possess much learning, literary talent in no small amount, and an uncommon felicity in the use of the pencil, he had no pride or reserve, and hence was ready to condescend to tasks which other men were apt to think unworthy of his reputation. Of this nature were his "Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue" and his "Provincial Glossary," which respectively appeared in 1785 and 1788. The first is a mere collection of cant and slang terms, with their proper explanations, forming a volume certainly not without some power of amusing, and even of informing, but yet one which the world were better wanting than having. Some of the *roces* serve to keep in mind matters connected with history, as, for instance—"Used up: killed": a military saying originating from a message sent by the late General Guise, on the expedition at Carthage, where he desired the commander-in-chief to order him some more grenadiers, for those he had were all *used up*." Mr Grose also published, under the title of "A Guide to Health, Beauty, Honour, and Riches," a curious collection of the quack advertisements which had appeared during many years in the London newspapers, holding forth those blessings to mankind. With this he gave a preface, in which, with Addisonian humour, he endeavoured to prove, by means of these advertisements, that the advances made of late years in natural science were not exceeded by those made in all the arts and conveniences of life. "Justice," says he, "makes it necessary to observe and commend the spirit of philanthropy reigning among the several ingenious professors of the different arts, sciences, and callings, who, like Mr Ashley the punch-maker on Ludgate Hill, and that second *Talpacotus* Mr Patence, surgeon by birth, dentist, and dancing-master, do not consult their own emolument, but labour solely *pro bono publico*." \* \* Indeed, the self-denial of one of these gentlemen is rarely to be paralleled, as, at the very instant he with the most unbounded generosity offers thousands to persons unknown, himself labours under the frowns of fortune, as he acknowledges by his letter from the King's Bench.

Does a lady," he continues, "show signs of an ungraceful shape, Mr Parsons, by his well-turned stays, prevents that misfortune: has it already taken place, the same artist will completely hide it. Irregular or decayed teeth give place to those of Mr Patence with six different enamels; and that wonderful operator replaces fallen noses, uvulas, broken jaw-bones, and, in a word, cures all the disorders to which the human frame is liable, as he offers clearly to prove by occult demonstration; being, to use his own words, *mechanically accented and anatomically perfected in the human structure*. Persons suffering under the racking paroxysms of the gout, so as to be unable to move, are radically cured of that terrible disorder by the month, the year, or for life, without medicine, by muscular motion only; or by another secret, which the generous possessor offers to communicate to the public for the trifling sum of twenty thousand pounds: and all the disorders contained in the catalogue of human misery yield to the wonderful baths of Dr Dominicetti, whence, like Eason from the kettle of Medea, the patient springs out totally renovated. But, as Dr Shee well observes, prevention is certainly even better than a cure. Mrs Phillips steps modestly in with the offer of her wares, prepared with the result of thirty-five years' experience. This public-spirited matron informs us, that, after ten years' retirement from business, she has resumed it again, from representations that, since her recess, goods comparable to what she used to vend cannot be procured. Another lady of the same profession, Mrs Perkins, attempts to deny the authenticity of this account, and, with a proper disapprobation of infamous publications, declares herself the true successor of the late Mrs Phillips.

The grand scale on which business is carried on by our professors and artists in different walks, reflects an importance and dignity on the nation, as well as points out the enlarged ideas of those gentlemen. Thus, Mr Perfect, of Town-Malling, does not, like

former keepers of madhouses, take in lunatics; his more comprehensive mansion lodges and boards lunacy itself. Mr Pinchbeck, painter-in-general, executes all branches of his business from a hovel to a palace, and from a whisky to a stage-coach; and the ingenious Mr John Callaway, the chimney-sweeper, does not, like his brethren, put out the fire in chimneys, but, acting on a larger scale, extinguishes the chimneys.

That the occult science called white magic, and the study of astrology, flourish among us, is evident from the handbills of Mrs Corbyn from Germany, who answers all lawful questions; Mrs Edwards, who dedicates her knowledge to the ladies; Mr William Jones's nephew, the second, last, and only survivor of his family; the person who discovers whether affections are sincere; and that gifted sage of St Martin's Lane, who cures the toothache by a sweet-scented letter.

The science of adorning and beautifying the human form seems to be systematically cultivated by many artists of all denominations, as is evident from the institution of academies for hair-dressing; and, among the gentlemen of the comb and razor, it would be wrong to pass over the two men who have the neatest barbers' shops in London, the modesty of whose prices demands the acknowledgments of the public. The professors of the cosmetic art offer innumerable pastes, washes, pomades, and perfumes, by which the ravages of time are prevented or counteracted. Even our public spectacles bespeak a degree of improvement hitherto unknown: witness that wonderful wonder of all wonders, the brave soldier and learned Doctor Katterfelto, whose courage and learning are only equalled by his honesty and love for this country; the first evinced in his returning the L.2000 to Captain Paterson, and the second in remaining here though unpensioned, notwithstanding the many offers from the Queen of France, the request of his friend and correspondent Dr Franklin, and the positive commands of the King of Prussia.

Mr Powell, the Fire-Eater, is undoubtedly, as his motto observes, a singular genius. Nor are the performances of Messrs Astley and Hughes less remarkable, though I am sorry to be under the necessity of making an exception to part of their exhibitions as being liable to increase that spirit of expense and luxury too prevalent among us. The article I allude to is that of showing that one person may ride on several horses at the same time; a practice that may possibly become fashionable among the vain and extravagant; whereas, had they introduced some method by which one horse would be enabled to carry a greater number of persons than usual, their discovery would have been truly commendable. By the diligence of our keepers of itinerant menageries, we are indulged with the sight of the learned dog, the wonderful bird, and the surprising unicorn, with divers others too numerous to mention.

The Bottle-Conjuror appears to have been an impostor, and what he promised to perform seems to have been possible alone to those choir-singers who can officiate at two places at the same time.

Candour has obliged me to insert some articles which do not tend to the honour of the parties concerned, or that of the country wherein they suffered; such as those relative to the sale of seats in parliament, and guardians offering to dispose of their wards. For the first, it is no new matter, having been the usage time out of mind; and for the other, the selfishness of the proposal serves, like shade in a picture, or discord in music, to form a contrast, and set off the disinterested offers of other advertisers.—&c. &c.

In this playful style, under the title of *The Grumbler*, Grose composed a series of papers, which he published in a newspaper. They display considerable knowledge of the world, and no small amount of shrewd good sense. The reader will find them, together with a great variety of little comic pieces, in prose and verse, and many table stories and anecdotes, in a volume entitled *The Olio*, published the year after the author's death. From the *Olio*, better than from any other of his works, we get an idea of the character of Grose, droll, garrulous, good-natured, yet withal judicious and penetrating. His only other humorous production was one entitled "Rules for drawing Caricatures—the subject illustrated with four copper-plates; with an Essay on Comic Painting."

In the summer of 1789, he made a tour in Scotland for the purpose of composing, respecting that country, a work similar to his *Antiquities of England and Wales*. In the course of his rambles, while enjoying the hospitality of a brother antiquary, Mr Riddel of Glenriddel, at Friars' Carse in Dumfriesshire, he met the poet Burns, who then resided on a neighbouring farm. With kindred talents, and a common sociality of nature, Grose and Burns could not fail to become friends. The poet expressed a wish that the projected "Antiquities of Scotland" should comprehend a sketch of Alloway Kirk, near Ayr—an object endeared to him from early recollections; and the antiquary promised to gratify him on condition that he should communicate in writing, for insertion in the book, some of the strange tales of diablerie which he had just related respecting the ruin. This, it is well known, led to the composition of the tale of "Tam o' Shanter," which was first published in the "Antiquities of Scotland." This work began to appear in the year 1790, and was completed next year in two volumes, quarto: the preface makes grateful allusion to the *pretty tale* contributed by the Ayrshire bard. During his Scottish ramble, Grose visited Edinburgh, where the limner Kay took a stolen sketch of his portly figure, representing him in striped vest,

riding coat, and boots, and a chin like that of the pelican, water-provisioned for a walk across the desert. At this time Grose was accompanied by a young man who assisted him in the taking of his drawings, and whom he denominated his *Guinea Pig*. The impression made on Burns's mind by his gloomy manners and devout zeal as an antiquary (a kind of character new and strange to the poet) is shown in the well-known verses he wrote "on Captain Grose's Peregrinations in Scotland:"

"Hear, land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,  
Frae Maiden-kirk to Johnnie Groat's,  
If there's a hole in a' your coats,  
I rede ye, tent it;  
A chiel's amang you, takin' notes,  
And, faith, he'll prent it.

If in your bounds ye chance to light  
Upon a fine fat fodge wight,  
O' stature short, but genius bright,  
That's he, mark weel—  
And, wow! he has an unc o' slight  
O' cawk and keel.

By some auld howlet-haunted biggin,  
Or kirk deserted by its riggin,  
It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in—  
Some eldritch part"—&c.

In the spring of 1791, Grose set out for Ireland, with the design of sketching the antiquities of that kingdom; and he had proceeded a certain way with his task, when, sitting one afternoon at dinner in the house of his friend Mr Hone, he was suddenly struck with apoplexy, and almost immediately expired. A few days afterwards, the following appeared in a newspaper, as a proper inscription for his tomb:—

"Here lies Francis Grose.  
On Thursday, May 12, 1791,  
Death put an end to his  
*Views and Prospects.*"

Some years before, a Sketch of Grose was written in verse by a friend of his, named Davis, residing at Wandsworth; it conveys so lively a picture of the man, that we transfer the most of it to our pages:—

"Grose to my pen a theme supplies,  
With life and laughter in his eyes.  
Oh! how I can survey with pleasure,  
His breast and shoulders' ample measure;  
His dimpled chin, his rosy cheek,  
His skin from inward lining sleek.

When to my house he deigns to pass  
Through miry ways, to take a glass,  
How gladly entering in I see  
His belly's vast rotundity!  
But though so fat, he beats the leaner  
In ease, and bodily demeanour;  
And in that mass of flesh so droll  
Resides a social, gen'rous soul.

Humble—and modest to excess,  
Nor conscious of his worthiness,  
He's yet too proud to worship state,  
And haunt with courtly bend the great.  
He draws not for an idle word,  
Like modern duellists, his sword,  
But shows upon a gross affront,  
The valour of a Bellamont.  
On comic themes, in grave disputes,  
His sense the nicest palate suits;  
And more, he's with good nature blest,  
Which gives to sense superior zest.

His age, if you are nice to know,  
Some two and forty years ago,  
Euphrosyne upon his birth  
Smil'd gracious, and the god of mirth  
O'er bowls of nectar spoke his joy,  
And promis'd vigour to the boy.

With Horace, if in height compar'd,  
He somewhat overtops the bard;  
Like Virgil, too, I must confess,  
He's rather negligent in dress;  
Restless besides, he loves to roam,  
And when he seems most fix'd at home,  
Grows quickly tir'd, and breaks his tether,  
And scours away in spite of weather;  
Perhaps by sudden start to France  
Or else to Ireland takes a dance;  
Or schemes for Italy pursues,  
Or seeks in England other views;  
And though still plump, and in good case,  
He sails or rides from place to place,  
So oft to various parts has been,  
So much of towns and manners seen,  
He yet with learning keeps alliance,  
Far travell'd in the books of science;  
Knows more, I can't tell how, than those  
Who pore whole years on verse and prose;  
And while through pond'rous works they toil,  
Turn pallid by the midnight oil.

He's judg'd, as artist, to inherit  
No small degree of Hogarth's spirit;  
Whether he draws from London air  
The cit swift driving in his chair,  
O'erturn'd with precious sirlorn's load,  
And frighted madam in the road;  
While to their darling vill they haste,  
So fine in Asiatic taste.  
Or bastard sworn to simple loon:  
Or sects that dance to Satan's tune.

Deep in antiquity he's read,  
And though at college never bred,  
As much of things appears to know,  
As erst knew Leland, Hume, or Stowe;  
Brings many a proof and shrewd conjecture  
Concerning Gothic architecture:  
Explains how by mechanic force  
Was thrown of old stone, man, or horse;

Describes the kitchen high and wide,  
That lusty abbot's paunch supplied;  
Of ancient structures writes the same,  
And on their ruins builds his name.  
Oh, late may, by the fates' decree,  
My friend's Metempsychosis be,  
But when the time of change shall come,  
And Atropos shall seal his doom,  
Round some old castle let him play,  
The brisk Ephemerion of a day;  
Then from the short-liv'd race escape,  
To please again in human shape."

#### MR VENABLES' BOOK ON RUSSIA.

ONE of the most pleasing and instructive works upon Russia which we have received from the press of late years, is one now in our hands, bearing the title of "Domestic Scenes in Russia: in a Series of Letters describing a Year's Residence in that country, chiefly in the Interior: by the Rev. R. Lister Venables, M. A." A connection, by marriage, with a Russian family of high respectability, resident in the heart of the country, and nearly in the line between St Petersburg and Moscow, led to the visit which the reverend author has here described in detail. He landed at St Petersburg on the 21st of June 1837, and after a stay of nine days, set out for Torjok in a sort of diligence, capable of holding four persons, and drawn by four horses placed abreast. The distance between the capital and Torjok is about three hundred and eighty miles, but Mr Venables was obliged to pay for the whole journey to Moscow, which is one hundred and fifty miles farther. The sum charged was L.16 sterling, which, after all, could not be called a very extravagant charge, considering that the traveller and his family had the whole vehicle to themselves. They found a good macadamised road, with new and handsome inns, on the whole line between St Petersburg and Torjok, where they turned aside from the Moscow route, and soon after reached Krasnoe, the hospitable mansion of their friends.

After a residence of three months at this place, Mr Venables paid a visit to another relative at the town of Yaroslavl, a place containing twenty-eight thousand inhabitants, and lying about two hundred miles to the north-east of Moscow. Many of the letters of the reverend traveller are dated from Krasnoe and Yaroslavl, and they refer chiefly to the rural economy of the country, presenting many interesting particulars respecting the relations between the higher and lower classes. The nobility, we learn, form a most extensive body. Family titles are enjoyed equally by every descendant of a noble house, without any distinction in favour of the eldest branch, and hence the immense number of nobles occasionally found to bear one title and name. "As an instance of this (says Mr Venables), I may observe, that of the name of Galitzin only, there are at present no less than three hundred princes; how many princesses there may be, I do not know, but they, of course, are also very numerous." This renders titles in some respects of little consequence, but, in others, they are of the highest value. "The nobles are free from the conscription, which presses heavily on all other classes. They are in no case liable to the knout and other corporeal punishments; and they can always claim to enter the service, at the least, as under officers, and to receive a commission, or to attain an equivalent rank as civilians, at the farthest in three years, excepting in cases of misconduct." These are valuable privileges, but a much more valuable one is yet to be noticed. None but a noble can possess serfs or bondmen, and, without these, landed property in Russia is of small account. Property here is estimated "not by the annual income of the estate, but by the number of souls, that is, of male peasants, which it contains, for the fair sex is never counted in the census." A Russian proprietor talks always of possessing *souls*, and many proprietors have truly an immense number of them. Count Cheremetieff, the largest land-proprietor in the country, has not less, it is computed, than one hundred and ten thousand souls on his estates, counting the males only under that denomination.

"The footing," says Mr Venables, "on which the agricultural serf practically stands towards his master, is, in most respects, that of a small tenant; the principal difference being that he cannot change his employment, or move from home, without his master's leave, which is sometimes obtained for a certain annual sum, called *obrok*, in lieu of service. As a general rule, he has a house and a portion of land, for which he pays rent in labour instead of money. He works three days in the week for his master, and has the remainder of his time at his own disposal. A day's labour of a man includes that of his wife and his horse when requisite. \* \* \* The peasant cannot be legally sold or transferred from one master to another, excepting with the whole of his family; but this law is often broken or evaded." In some points, these relations between serf and master are not of an illiberal kind; and though "grossly ignorant," and a slave, the Russian peasant seems in general contented and happy. His severest trials, according to our author, arise from the conscription—married men, or the sons of widows, or aged parents, being often mercilessly torn away from families of which they were the chief prop and stay.

The reverend author of the volume before us com-

\* Murray, London.



firms the statements of others, who have represented the system of government in Russia as essentially military. A martinet-like strictness pervades all the arrangements for insuring order and peace in the country. The fire-establishments give an example of this. "The fire-establishments (says Mr Venables) here are not, as in England, in the hands of insurance companies, but under the immediate control of government. The firemen are soldiers, and the horses, engines, &c., are the property of the crown; the whole, however, appears to be well organised, and the general regulations laid down by law, to be extremely good. In the towns, watchmen are stationed day and night on the tops of high towers, which are built in various quarters, so as to command the town; at the foot of each tower is an establishment of firemen, horses, and engines, which are or ought to be always ready at a moment's notice.

As soon as the watchman on the tower discovers a fire, he rings a bell, which gives the alarm to the firemen below, while at the same time, by a telegraph, which can be used either by day or night, there being in the latter case a certain arrangement of lanterns, he points out the direction of the fire, and warns the establishments in other quarters of the town to send their assistance. As soon as the train of engines is ready, it proceeds at full speed through the streets, neither stopping nor turning aside, being preceded by a horseman, who gallops along, shouting and warning all persons to clear the way. If it is dark, the leading engine carries a bright light high up on a pole, which is easily distinguished, by its position, from the lamps of a carriage as it moves along.

In the villages, where the rules are carried into effect, every house has a small board affixed to it, on which is painted a number, and under the number is a figure of some implement useful at a fire: on one is drawn a bucket, on another an axe, on a third a ladder or a pole with a hook at the end for pulling down burning thatch and rafters. The moment a fire is discovered in the village, the inhabitant of every house is bound to appear with the implement depicted outside his door; and there are various regulations for establishing order in the operations, such as the appointing one man out of a certain number to be the captain of the gang, and to direct their proceedings."

From Yaroslavl, Mr Venables set out in October for Moscow, where he remained some time on his way to Tamboff, a town about three hundred and eighty miles to the south of Moscow. At Tamboff he spent the winter, and in March returned to St Petersburg, on the homeward route. The reverend traveller had thus an opportunity of observing the country both extensively and closely, and he communicates much valuable information on the local governments, on the manners and customs of the people, and on other points of serious interest. In place of following him, however, into the details of these matters, we prefer to introduce to our readers some of the lighter and anecdotal passages with which Mr Venables' work is largely and pleasantly interspersed. Masquerades, it appears, are common at Christmas in Russia, and it is not unusual for private families on these occasions to throw open their houses for the admission of all masks who may choose to come. This custom led to a strange occurrence in the winter of 1834, which our author thus describes:—"A ball was given, at the period mentioned, in a house at St Petersburg, and the ordinary signal (of placing candles in the windows) was displayed for the admission of masks, several of whom arrived in the course of the evening, staid a short time as usual, and departed. At length a party entered, dressed as Chinese, and bearing on a palanquin a person whom they called their chief, saying that it was his fete-day. They set him down very respectfully in the middle of the room, and commenced dancing what they said was their national dance around him. When this was concluded, they separated, and mingled with the general company, speaking French very well, and making themselves extremely agreeable. After a while, they gradually began to disappear unnoticed, slipping out of the room one or two at a time, till at last they were all gone, leaving their chief sitting motionless in dignified silence in his palanquin in the middle of the room. The ball began to thin, and the attention of those who remained was wholly drawn to the grave figure of the Chinese mask.

The master of the house at length went up to him, and told him that his companions were all gone, politely begging him to take off his mask; that he and his guests might know to whom they were indebted for the pleasure which the exhibition had afforded them. The Chinese, however, gave no reply by word or sign, and a feeling of uneasy curiosity gradually drew around him the guests who remained in the ball-room. The silent figure still took no notice of all that was passing around him, and the master of the house at length with his own hand took off the mask, and discovered to the horrified bystanders the face of a corpse!" The police, who were sent for on the instant, never got any clue to the actors in this transaction. Surgical examination showed the man to have been almost newly strangled. The masked dancers came, it was found from the servants, in a handsome carriage with the body which they thus strangely threw off their hands.

Mr Venables tells some lively stories regarding Russian field-sports, or rather regarding the means taken to extirpate those serious pests of the country, wolves and bears. "Every one (says he) has heard of

the mode of catching these animals in pitfalls, by placing a lamb or a pig as a bait, on the top of a post rising out of the pit: they have in Russia a kind of trap, which is exceedingly simple, but which I never heard of before I came into the country. A small circle is inclosed with a palisade or some other fence, too high for a wolf to leap or climb over; this fence is again surrounded by another of the same kind, leaving a narrow space between the two: the outer fence has a door, which opens inwards, so as to fill up the space between the two palisades when it is set open. A lamb or a pig is placed at night in the inner circle, and being alone and cold, it naturally bleats, or grunts and squeals; the noise attracts the wolf, who enters the door which is open, and finding the inner fence still between him and his prey, prowls round it in hopes of discovering an opening. When he arrives at the door, having made the circuit of the place, he pushes against it, and thus shuts it, and imprisons himself; for the space in which he is, being narrow, and his back-bone very inflexible, he cannot turn, and the door is of course so hung as to shut from a very light pressure.

You have heard of the plan of shooting wolves on a moonlight night in winter, when two or three sportsmen place themselves, well armed, in a sledge, and are driven through the roads and tracks in the woods. As they go along, they pull the ears of a young pig which they take with them, and make it squeal, while behind the sledge trails a long rope, with a wisp of straw at the end of it. The wolf hears the pig squeal, and seeing the bundle of straw dancing along over the snow in the moonlight, makes a dash at it, mistaking it for his prey, and thus presents a fair mark to the guns in the sledge. This sport, like all others, has its vicissitudes; sometimes the disappointment is incurred of a blank night, and sometimes, on the other hand, too much game is started, and the amusement becomes somewhat dangerous. If the sportsmen have not time to pick up the wolves they kill, the others tear the bodies of their dead companions, and becoming furious, will attack the sledges. A gentleman who lives near here, and whom we often see, met with an adventure of this kind some time ago, and after making his pig squeal for some hours in vain, at length unexpectedly attracted such a troop of wolves, that he was obliged to fly for safety and trust to his horse's heels, and he was pursued by twelve or fourteen of the beasts even into the village."

Before closing our notice of the very meritorious work to which we have been indebted for these extracts, it is proper to observe, that some concluding remarks are given on Russian husbandry, from the pen of M. de Sabouloff, a gentleman practically versant with the subject. For some readers this portion of the work may be possessed of much interest.

#### SUSPENSION-BRIDGES.

It is a curious circumstance, that suspension-bridges, to which modern architecture has resorted as an improvement, in certain situations, upon the more common form of bridge-building, should in reality be an invention of savage life, and not the product of the advance of science. The earliest suspension-bridges of which we have any account, are those of China, reported to be of great extent and much ingenuity of structure. No particular description, however, of these Chinese bridges, has been obtained. But in South America, structures in some respects similar are found in many quarters, and these may justly be held as exhibiting bridges of suspension in their simplest and primitive form. Baron Humboldt gives a description of one seen by him near Penipe in South America. It was formed of a peculiar species of ropes, which were made from the fibrous roots of the American Agave, and were three or four inches in diameter. These ropes were attached at each side of the river to a rude scaffolding of trees, composed principally of two strong upright posts, strengthened below by smaller supports. Passing across from the two posts on one side to the two on the other, the ropes formed a pathway about eight feet broad, laid with small round pieces of bamboo, placed transversely. One strong rope constituted the balustrade on each side, being about three feet above the pathway, and joined to it by upright stiles. As the weight of the bridge would pull the scaffolding inwards and downwards to the river, the structure was kept in place by ropes passing outwards, or landwards, from the upright posts to the ground. As the bridgeway was of considerable height, these ropes ran to the ground at a sharp inclination, and thus the bridge had to be ascended by a kind of ladder or stairs. This rope-bridge was one hundred and twenty-seven feet long. There is great peril, according to the accounts of travellers, in passing such bridges, which look like ribbons suspended over an impetuous torrent or deep ravine. Baron Humboldt says, nevertheless, that "the danger is not very great, when a single person crosses over by himself, especially if he runs as quickly as possible, throwing the body forward. But the oscillations of the ropes become very violent when the traveller is conducted by an Indian, who walks much quicker than he; or if, affrighted by the appearance of the water, seen through the interstices of the bamboos, he is imprudent enough to stop in the middle, and lay hold of the ropes which serve for balustrades." Some of the South American rope-bridges are strong enough to permit loaded mules to pass over them. But, in ge-

neral, these structures go rapidly to decay, and require new ropes to be substituted for some of the old ones every eight or ten years. As the natives are by no means punctual in attending to these points, the rope-bridges have often holes in them, which are large enough to precipitate the unwary traveller into the abyss beneath.

Such is the primitive form of those structures, which the aids of science and art have moulded into so elegant and beautiful a shape in Britain and other civilised countries. In what instance chains were first used in making suspension-bridges, may be difficult to determine. The natives of Hindostan appear to have formed suspension-bridges of great beauty and strength, by means, not of rough ropes, but of cane, with iron bolts and fastenings in some parts of the structure. Major Rennel describes one bridge (chiefly made of cane) over the Sampoo in Hindostan, of about 600 feet in length. Turner, also, in his voyage to Thibet, gives the plan of a bridge in that country, which is 140 feet long, and which is supported by five chains, covered with pieces of bamboo. The first chain-bridge constructed in Britain is believed to have been the Winch-Bridge over the river Tees, erected about the year 1740, and forming a communication between the counties of Durham and York. A description of this bridge is given as follows in Hutchinson's Antiquities of Durham:—"About two miles above Middleton, where the river (Tees) falls in repeated cascades, a bridge, suspended on iron-chains, is stretched from rock to rock, over a chasm near sixty feet deep, for the passage of travellers, but particularly of miners. The bridge is seventy feet in length, and little more than two feet broad, with a hand-rail on one side, and planked in such a manner that the traveller experiences all the tremulous motion of the chain, and sees himself suspended over a roaring gulf, on an agitated and restless gangway, to which few strangers dare trust themselves."

More than half a century passed away after the erection of the Winch-Bridge over the Tees, ere any other structures of the same kind were attempted in Britain. Previously to 1811, however, eight chain-bridges had been constructed in the United States by the enterprising people of that country. One of these, over the river Merrimack, in Massachusetts, had an arch of 244 feet span, and two carriage-ways, each fifteen feet broad. This bridge was capable of supporting five hundred tons, and was finished in 1809. Leaving out of sight various works which were projected (and some of them commenced) but not completed shortly after the year mentioned, the second suspension-bridge finished in Britain was one over the river Gala, close by the town of Galashiels. The person who had the merit of projecting this bridge, the first ever constructed in Scotland, was Mr Richard Lees, an extensive woollen-cloth manufacturer of Galashiels, whose works were situated on both sides of the Gala, and who therefore conceived the idea of making a convenient communication between the different parts of his works. At an expense of £40, he got a foot-bridge formed in 1816, of slender iron-wires, and one hundred and eleven feet in length. It was commonly and properly termed a wire-bridge, and was the first structure of that kind ever seen in Britain. Though very slight, as may be guessed from its petty cost, it has endured well the action of time, and is still passable and useful. It shakes or oscillates very considerably, but yet not so much as to be alarming, or even disagreeable. In 1817, the year following the erection of Mr Lees's bridge, the late Sir John Hay, Bart. of Hayston, erected another wire-bridge over the Tweed, about a mile and a half below the town of Peebles, in order to join his two properties of Kingsmeadows and Eshiels. This bridge is one hundred and ten feet in length, and the footway four feet in breadth. It cost £100, and is consequently a much more solid and steady structure than that over the Gala. Four strong hollow tubes of cast-iron, two at each end of the bridge, are erected four feet apart, and from each of these hollow posts a series of wires, three tenths of an inch in diameter, stretch out at various inclinations to the road-way, and sustain it. This bridge, when first erected, was crowded with people, without showing any signs of weakness. A slight spring and tremor are all that can be observed in passing over it. It is solely a foot-bridge. From its extremely romantic situation on the Tweed, from the beauty of the walks, shrubbery, and little ornamented cottage beside it, as well as from the fine general appearance of the country around, this bridge is rendered one of the most picturesque spectacles which the admirer of beautiful scenery can visit or behold. Another wire-bridge was erected shortly after the preceding one, over the Ettrick, at Thirlstane Castle, by the late Lord Napier. It measures about 125 feet span, and was suspended by wires in the same way as the Kingsmeadows bridge, as well as the Galashiels one.

Mr Stevenson, civil engineer, who has an excellent account of Scottish suspension-bridges in the Philosophical Journal, describes the Dryburgh suspension-bridge as the first erected on the Tweed (and indeed in Scotland) upon catenarian principles; that is to say, where chains were the instruments of suspension. It was first built upon the same plan as the Kingsmeadows one, chains only being substituted for the wires radiating from the end posts or hollow tubes described. But, on the 15th of January 1818, after the bridge, which measured 260 feet across, had been on the Dryburgh ferry for about six months, "a most

violent gale of wind took place (says Mr Stevenson), when the vibrating motion was so great, that the lowest radiating chains were broken, the platform blown down, and the bridge completely destroyed. A number of persons who saw the accident concurred in stating, that the vertical motion of the roadway of the bridge, before its fall, would have pitched or thrown a person walking along it into the river." This bridge had been erected at an expense of £500, and had proved so extremely useful, being constructed for foot passengers and led horses, that Lord Buchan decided at once upon reconstructing it, which was accordingly done, at an additional expense of £220. The construction of the new bridge is as follows:—Four posts (two at each end), consisting of strong Memel logs, form the points over which the suspensory chains pass, to sustain the bridge on the one side, and on the other to be fixed firmly in the ground. The chains of one side meet the corresponding chains of the opposite side in the centre of the bridge, having inclined downwards from the top of the posts (twenty-eight feet high) to the level of the top of the side-rails or balustrade. Numerous perpendicular rods of iron descend from these great chains at regular distances, and sustain the roadway. This suspension of the roadway by upright rods from large chains, is called the catenarian principle. The roadway of the Dryburgh chain-bridge is nine feet wide at the ends, but converges towards the centre, until it is diminished to a width of four feet and a half. It is now an extremely steady, strong, and serviceable bridge.

Another chain-bridge, of a more grand and bold design, was built across the Tweed at Norham ford, five miles from Berwick, in the years 1819–20. Every thing about this bridge, which is called the (Berwick) Union Chain-bridge, is on a great scale. Its span is 361 feet, its roadway 18 feet broad, and its cost was £6050. It has three chains on each side, passing between the points of suspension on the two banks of the river. These six suspensory chains (or rather twelve, as the half is usually called one chain) pass, on the Scottish side, over pillars of asler masonry, measuring sixty feet in height, and on the other side are fixed into a tower of masonry, built on a precipitous bank, and twenty feet in height. From these parallel ranges of suspensory chains, perpendicular rods depend at regular distances, and support the roadway, which is made of timber, with iron cart-tracks laid for the carriage wheels. The weight of the whole bridge, between the points of suspension, is estimated at 100 tons. One main chain, from side to side, alone weighs 10 tons.

This chain-bridge, which is light and elegant in appearance, was the first bridge of the kind in Great Britain, calculated for the passage of loaded carriages. Its successful completion and subsequent utility gave a great stimulus to the erection of suspension-bridges in other parts of Britain. The Menai bridge, or that over the straits dividing the Isle of Anglesea from Caernarvonshire, was finished after this period. It is of the length of 560 feet between the points of suspension, and so much elevated above the surface of the water, that vessels of considerable size can pass under it. After these first suspension-bridges were erected, a new plan was hit upon, of passing the supporting chains below the roadway, instead of placing them above, and suspending the roadway from them. For example, the suspension-bridge across the river Kelvin, near Glasgow, was constructed after this fashion. This bridge was sixty-three feet in span, and had a roadway twelve feet wide, which rested, by means of cast-iron brackets, on the row of chains or rods passing under it from the abutment of one side to that of the other.

Whether the chains are placed above or below, seems to be of little consequence, and experience has in fact proved that safe and excellent bridges may be made both ways, for of late years many additions have been made to the list already noticed, some being upon one principle, and some on the other. We do not, however, propose to carry our notice of this subject any farther here, satisfied with having pointed out the cases which have an interest attached to them, from being the first attempts at suspension-bridge building in this country. Under particular circumstances, certainly, this species of bridge appears to have decided advantages. Cheapness is in itself an advantage not to be despised. It was calculated that a stone-bridge over the Tweed at Norham would have cost four times the sum expended on the chain-bridge. Time, however, has yet in some measure to prove whether the durability of iron suspension-bridges is at all comparable to the lasting character of those made of stone.

#### ANECDOTE OF NAPOLEON.

After having gained the battle of Wagram, the Emperor Napoleon established his head-quarters for a time at Schoenbrunn, and there occupied himself, pending the negotiations for his Austrian alliance, with reviewing his troops, and distributing among them rewards and honours. One old and brave regiment of the rewards was drawn out before him for this purpose, his custom being to examine every corps individually, under the guidance of the officers. After having formed the regiment into columns, Napoleon entered among the ranks, and bestowed praises and decorations on all who appeared worthy of them. Five hours he spent on this occupation, and at length, when he had satisfied himself that no one man's claims had been overlooked, he finished by saying aloud to the

colonel, "Now present to me the bravest soldier in your whole regiment." In some cases this might have been a difficult matter; it did not appear so now. The colonel, indeed, hesitated for a moment, but the question was caught by the soldiers, and one universal answer came from the ranks. "Morio! Corporal Morio!" was the cry. The colonel approved of the decision, and Morio was called forward. He was a man still young, but embrowned by service, and he already wore on his person three badges of merit, and the cross of the Legion of Honour. Napoleon looked at him attentively. "Ah," said he, "you have seen service?" "Fifteen years, my emperor," replied Morio; "sixteen campaigns and ten wounds—not to speak of contusions." "How many great battles?" asked the emperor. "Sire, I was at your heels at the Bridge of Arcola; I was the first man who entered Alexandria; it was I who gave you my knapsack for your pillow at the bivouac of Ulm, when forty thousand Austrians capitulated; I took five hussars prisoners with my own hands on the day of Austerlitz; it was I who served you—" "Hold! it is well, very well! Morio, I name you baron of the empire, and to that title I add a hereditary gift of five thousand francs a year." Acclamations rose anew from the soldiery. "Ah, my emperor," said Morio, "this is too great a reward for me. But I will not play the usurer with your bounty. None of my companions, while I have it, shall want food or clothing."

Morio still lives. He only quitted the service when his master fell, and, in spite of that change, Morio still enjoys the emperor's gift. He has kept his word to his companions. No old soldier in the department to which he has retired, wants wherewithal to drink the health of Napoleon.—*French newspaper.*

#### THE POOR MAN'S SONG.

[FROM UHLAND.]

A poor man, poorer none, am I,  
And walk the world alone,  
Yet do I call a spirit free,  
And cheerful heart my own.  
A gleesome child I play'd about  
My dear, dear parents' hearth,  
But grief has fallen upon my path,  
Since they are laid in earth.  
I see rich gardens round me bloom,  
I see the golden grain,  
My path is bare and barren all,  
And trod with toil and pain.  
And yet, though sick at heart, I'll stand  
Where happy faces throng,  
And wish good-morrow heartily  
To all that pass along.  
A bounteous God! Thou leav'st me not  
To comfortless despair;  
There comes a gentle balm from heaven  
For every child of care.  
Still in each dell thy sacred house  
Points mutely to the sky,  
The organ and the choral song  
Arrest each passer by.  
Still shine the sun, the moon, the stars,  
With blessing even on me,  
And, when the evening bell rings out,  
Then, Lord, I speak with thee.  
One day shall to the good disclose  
Thy halls of joy and rest,  
Then in my wedding robes even I  
Shall seat me as thy guest.

[The above has already appeared in a newspaper.]

#### SCRAPS FROM AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS, AS COLLECTED IN THE NEW YORK MIRROR.

##### SALE OF A CITY.

We learn from the Arkansas Times that "the city of Rockroe was sold a few days ago for taxes." We are not informed whether the inhabitants were thrown into the bargain.

##### RECIPE FOR THE FEVER AND AGUE.

As soon as the ice is out of the river, buy yourself an old skiff, take part in a seine, and go a-fishing on shores. Stand half-leg deep in the water for six weeks in succession, with two inches cat-fish slime on your trousers, and bathe the inside with new whisky, to keep it from striking to your stomach. Put up a couple of barrels of cat-fish for family use—slight sprinkling of salt, plenty of Maumee water—that's pretty strong, especially at this season of the year. Take plenty of fresh air, especially at night; and if you can't get to sleep in the big government-purchase, take a sleeping apartment with only two sides, and neither top nor bottom. By and bye the cat-fish begin to show their strength—a sprinkling more salt, plenty more Maumee water—a strong smell's very healthy. Eat plenty of cat-fish broth, and go a-'coonin' a nights for exercise. Weather begins to grow hot; good plan to get asleep under the shade of a tree, and let the sun come round and catch you at it. Eyes begin to look yellow; mouth tastes bad; Maumee water don't sit well; tongue furred; fever; doctor; drugs; and so on. Get better: more cat-fish broth, mixture of green-corn, buttermilk and plenty of new whisky. Bowels out of order; physic out with muskmelons; begin to feel sealy; heels running up to seed; clothes grow too large; body sharpened out, and almost ready to drive down; take more buttermilk, and lie down on the sunny side of a haystack, and, in half an hour, shake like a lamb's tail. Proper bad country!

##### MISCONCEPTION.

As a canal boat was passing under a bridge, the captain gave the usual warning, "Look out!" when a little Frenchman, who was in the cabin, obeyed the order by popping his head out of the window, which received a severe thump by coming in contact with a pillar of the bridge. He drew it back in a great pot, and exclaimed, "Deese Americans say look out when dey means look in."

#### THE BITTER BITTEN.

A man in the dress of a workman was lately walking in the streets of Berlin with a packet in his hand, sealed with five seals, and inscribed with an address, and a note that it contained one hundred thalers in treasury bills. As the bearer appeared to be at a loss, he was accosted by a passenger, who asked him what he was looking for. The simple countryman placed the packet in the inquirer's hands, and requested that he would read the address. The reply was made as with an agreeable surprise. "Why! this letter is for me: I have been expecting it for a long while!" The messenger upon this demanded ten thalers for the carriage of the packet, which was readily paid, with a liberal addition to the porter. The new possessor of the packet hastened to an obscure corner to examine his prize, but, on breaking the seals, found nothing but a few sheets of blank paper, on which was written "Done."

#### POWER.

The powerful will always be unjust and vindictive. M. de Vendome said pleasantly on this subject, that when the troops were on the march, he had examined the quarrels between the mules and their drivers, and that, to the shame of humanity, reason was almost always on the side of the mules. M. Duverney, so learned in natural history, knew by the inspection of the tooth of an animal if he was carnivorous or granivorous. He used to say, "Show me the tooth of an unknown animal, and I will judge of his habits." By his example, a moral philosopher could say, "Mark to me the degree of power with which a man is clothed, and by that power I shall judge of his quality."

#### LEGAL ELOQUENCE.

A young backwoods lawyer lately concluded his argument in a case of *quare clausum fregit*, with the following sublime burst:—"If, gentlemen of the jury, the defendant's hogs are permitted to roam at large over the fair fields of my client, with impunity and without pokes—then—yes, then, indeed, have our forefathers fought, and bled, and died, in vain!"

#### A BACKWOODS HEROINE.

A correspondent of the Louisville Journal says, "Last week, a Mrs MacBride, of Monroe county, a widow lady, was informed by one of her children that the dogs had *tree'd* a panther within half a mile of the house. Having no ammunition, she sent to a neighbour's and procured powder and lead, moulded some bullets, loaded her gun, and proceeded to the place, and brought down her game at the first fire. The report of the gun started up another panther near at hand, which ran up a tree within half a mile of the other. She again loaded her gun and killed the second also at the first fire, on the top of one of the tallest trees. What would your city ladies say to this? I happened to be there the same day, and received the statement from herself."

#### ALL IN ALL.

In the west there is a man who is a chaste writer, an eloquent preacher, an honest pedlar, a first-rate fiddler, and above all a good man. He had better visit old Connecticut and reform the people there, and then come this way.

#### UNIVERSAL EQUALITY OF MAN.

There is but one way of securing universal equality to man; and that is, to regard every honest employment as honourable, and then for every man to learn, in whatever state he may be, therewith to be content, and to fulfil, with strict fidelity, the duties of his station, and to make every condition a post of honour.

#### A MISTAKE CORRECTED.

An orator holding forth in favour of "woman, dear divine woman," concludes thus:—"Oh, my hearers, depend upon it nothing beats a good wife." "I beg your pardon," replied one of his auditors; "a bad husband does."

#### YOUNG MEN BEWARE.

We heard of an old gentleman once who had three daughters, all of whom were marriageable. A young fellow went a-wooing the youngest, and finally got her consent to take him "for better or for worse." Upon application to the old fellow for his consent, he flew into a violent rage, declaring that no man should "pick his daughters in that way," and if he wished to get into his family, he might marry the oldest, or leave the house forthwith.

#### LOGIC.

A clergyman once undertook to convert a negro, who was all but incorrigible. As an *argumentum ad hominem*, he told Cuffy that the wicked did not live half their days. "Dat dare is queer," said Cuffy; "him no lib out half him day, hab. Well, den, I 'spose him die 'bout 'leben o'clock forenoon!"

#### A FRIENDLY INTIMATION.

The boarders of a tavern in Georgia were annoyed by flies in their butter. Judge Dooly took the tavern-keeper aside, and remarked to him, in a private way, that some of his friends thought it would be best for him to put the butter on one plate and the flies on another, and let the people mix them to suit themselves. He merely suggested it for consideration.

#### FRENCH POLICE.

So strict an eye is kept over the movements of foreigners in France, that an American, having lately forgotten his lodgings, was obliged to go to the police-office to obtain the necessary information, when, to his great surprise, he was told who he was, where he lodged, and where he had taken dinner.

#### A MISTAKE.

A doctor, on calling upon a gentleman who had been some time ailing, put a fee into the patient's hand, and took the medicine himself which he had prepared for the sick man; he was not made sensible of his error till he found himself getting ill, and the patient getting better.

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